Dislocating identity: Desegregation and the transformation of place

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Abstract

Whatever other changes it engenders, desegregation invariably produces a re-organization of space and place, a fact whose implications the psychological literature on the process has generally disregarded. The present article begins to address this gap. Drawing on research on place–identity processes, we argue that desegregation may alter not only the relationship between self and other, but also the relationship between self and place. As such, it may be experienced as a form of dislocation: an event that undermines shared constructions of place and the forms of located subjectivity they sustain. In order to develop this idea, we analyse a series of interviews conducted with holiday-makers on a formerly white but now multiracial beach in South Africa. The analysis demonstrates how white respondents' stories of desegregation evince an abiding concern with the loss of place, manifest in terms of an erosion of a sense of place belonging, attachment and familiarity and an undermining of the beach's capacity to act as a restorative environment of the self. The implications of such accounts for understanding personal and ideological resistance to desegregation are explored. The paper concludes by arguing that this problem provides an opportunity to conjoin environmental and social psychological work.

1. Introduction

The issue of desegregation has preoccupied social psychologists for several decades, yielding two closely related traditions of inquiry. The first has been concerned with measuring attitudes towards the desegregation in contexts as diverse as neighbourhoods, housing projects, schools, universities, churches, industry, and the armed forces (Clark, 1953; Ashmore, 1954; Greely & Sheatsley, 1971). From its outset, such work pursued the goal of advocacy as much as description. Seeking to promote racial integration, psychologists surveyed social attitudes to desegregation in order to discover the conditions under which ordinary people tend to embrace or reject its implementation. As it turned out, the lived experience of desegregation in itself proved to be an important determinant of attitudes, for

as Clark (1953, p. 59) anticipated in his influential summary of the early evidence, "…when desegregation takes place it is generally evaluated, even by those who were initially sceptical, as successful and is seen as increasing rather than decreasing social stability." The second, and more substantial, tradition of work on desegregation has been conducted under the rubric of the contact hypothesis: the idea that regular interaction between groups tends to reduce prejudice and is therefore a precondition for a more tolerant society. Building on Allport's (1954) classic summary, generations of researchers have studied how, when and why contact produces this kind of social psychological change. The emerging consensus is that it works primarily by decreasing intergroup anxiety, increasing perceptions of outgroup variability, and building more positive emotional responses to others (cf. Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000). However, these consequences tend to occur only if contact unfolds under facilitating conditions. Notably, it should be cooperative, institutionally supported, and geared

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towards the achievement of common goals. Moreover, it should involve expressions of friendship between equal status participants rather than superficial, instrumental or hierarchical exchanges.

As this synopsis conveys, much work on contact and desegregation has taken the form of action research. The field has evolved around the goal of understanding and promoting social change, and it arguably represents social psychology's most significant contribution to the struggle against racism. For this reason, Brewer (1997) commends the contact literature as a salutary example of how social psychologists can and should become involved in the formation of social policy. She points to the role of early pioneers in the field, including Allport and Clark, in shaping the outcome of the landmark Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka case, which led to the 1954 ruling on school desegregation in the USA. At the same time, she concedes the existence of several 'failures of implementation' in which desegregation has produced mixed or negative consequences. Experimental support for the efficacy of policies of contact and desegregation has not always been replicated in everyday contexts, where the 'optimal' conditions for interaction have proved difficult to establish or where staunch resistance to social change has sometimes materialized (e.g. see also Foster & Finchilescu, 1986; Connolly, 2000).

Arguably the most tangible manifestation of such resistance has emerged in the form of processes of resegregation. Often neglected by social psychologists (though see Schofield & Sagar, 1977), such processes have long concerned researchers in related disciplines. Whereas social psychologists have searched for the ideal conditions for desegregation, urban sociologists and geographers have described the apparent tenacity of segregation as a flexible and enduring system for ordering social life. The majority of the latter research has been conducted in American society, where the abolition of legal systems of segregation has generally not led to widespread racial integration but to the emergence of alternative forms of segregation, particularly between African Americans and other racial groups (e.g. Johnston, 1984; Massey & Denton, 1989, 1993). The new segregation, as Goldberg (1998) evocatively calls it, does not rely on Jim Crow style race legislation. Instead, it arises through the expression of individual and collective preferences about where to live, where to shop, where to work, and where to send children to school. The rise of 'gated communities' in the United States (Low, 2001) and 'security villages' in South Africa (Hook & Vrodljak, 2002) represent extreme examples of a more widespread process.

The psychological motivations that underlie such preferences are complicated and still poorly understood (see Clark, 1986; Glaster, 1988; Zubrinksy, 2000 for useful discussions). They may reflect, for example,

simple stereotypes about or attitudes towards other race groups (e.g. Farley, Steeh, Krysan, Jackson, & Reeves, 1994) or more complex lay theories about the likely impact of others' presence on factors such as property prices or quality of schooling (e.g. Hamilton & Bishop, 1976). Research on the contact hypothesis suggests further that failure to implement contact under 'optimal' conditions (e.g. equality of status) may be associated with negative reactions to desegregation. Even when such optimal conditions are present, desegregation may invoke concerns over the loss of group distinctiveness, producing anxiety, tension and a reassertion of intergroup boundaries (cf. Brewer, 1996).

The present article discusses another significant but curiously neglected source of resistance to desegregation, which stems from its potential to disrupt established human–environment relationships. This argument is developed in two ways. First, drawing on research on place identity, we suggest that desegregation may be fruitfully conceived as a form of 'dislocation', an event that violates shared constructions of place and the forms of located subjectivity they help to maintain. Second, in order to illustrate this idea, we present an analysis of interviews conducted with holiday-makers on a formerly white but now multiracial beach in South Africa. The interview accounts evince an abiding concern with the 'loss of place', the erosion of particular forms of 'being' and 'doing' on the beachfront, and, more broadly, the degradation of the personal and cultural tradition of the (white) family holiday.

2. From material settings to landscapes of meaning: Desegregation and the transformation of place–identity relationships

Whatever other changes it may engender, racial desegregation invariably produces a re-organization of space and place. By definition, the process entails a transformation of boundaries so that new kinds of encounter and co-presence become possible in places formerly characterised by racial isolation. To the readers of this journal, the environmental psychological implications of the process may appear both self-evident and of vital importance, but they have been largely ignored in the psychological literature on contact and desegregation.

Part of the problem is that psychological research on contact and desegregation remains hampered by a limited conception of the human–environment relationship. As Dixon (2001) has argued, the material environment of contact has been conceived in three main ways in the literature. First and most commonly, it has simply been viewed as an inert backdrop to social relations, a background feature that has a negligible impact on the social psychological processes it frames.

The majority of experimental research on desegregation falls into this category. Second, real or imagined places have served as a framework for comparing relations under different conditions of desegregation. For example, researchers have contrasted the racial attitudes of residents living in more and less segregated housing projects (e.g. Wilner, Walkley, & Cook, 1952) or under conditions where the hypothetical ratio of ingroup to outgroup members is systematically varied (e.g. Farley et al., 1994). Places, in this conception, are treated as convenient 'containers' of more important socio-economic, demographic or psychological factors. Finally, the environment of contact has been conceived in terms of its instrumental capacity to enable or constrain interaction. Some researchers have studied, for example, the role of physical and functional proximity on quantitative rates of interracial contact (e.g. Meer & Freedman, 1966; Robinson, 1980).

However valuable in its own right, we believe that this tradition of work is in danger of neglecting the deeper significance of human–environment relations for the psychology of desegregation (see also Paulus & Nagar, 1987). In treating the environment as a mere backdrop to, or container of, social relations, or as a behavioural setting that inhibits or encourages interaction, researchers have overlooked what Stokols (1990) calls the 'spiritual' dimension of human–environment relationships. That is, they have failed to acknowledge how people invest everyday environments with richly symbolic, aesthetic, moral, and, above all, identity-relevant meanings. By implication, they have disregarded how processes of desegregation, in altering the human geography of everyday relations, may be construed as undermining both the character of places and the forms of human subjectivity they sustain. Research on place identity processes may help to clarify some important aspects of this process.

3. The concept of place identity

Place identity is a core concept in the fields of environmental psychology and human geography (see Lalli, 1992; Bonnes & Secchiaroli, 1995 for useful overviews). Moving beyond a disembodied and abstracted notion of subjectivity, the term denotes how individuals' sense of self arises in part through their transactions with material environments. It suggests that such environments do not simply serve as settings for individuals' activities, actions or behaviours but are instead actively 'incorporated' as part of the self (Krupat, 1983). Disagreement exists about how to conceptualise place identity and accordingly about how it might best be investigated. In their classic formulation, Proshansky, Fabian, and Kaminoff (1983) defined place identity as a 'potpourri' of

cognitive, emotional and perceptual processes, formed through individuals' transactions with natural and built environments. Although they acknowledged that such processes were fragmented and constantly forming, Proshansky et al. (1983) argued that they crystallized over time into a distinctive sub-system of the self. Subsequent researchers have viewed this sub-system as a relatively enduring feature of individual psychology, which is amenable to psychometric measurement, quantification and hypothesis testing (e.g. Lalli, 1992; Pretty, Chipuer, & Bramston, 2003; Stedman, 2002).

A related but distinct tradition of work on place identity processes is rooted in the writings of human geographers such as Relph (1976) and Tuan (1980). This tradition seeks to recover the holistic phenomenology of 'being-in-place', focusing on how individuals construct a sense of self through the intentional activity of attributing place meanings. Verbal processes such as story telling are accorded particular significance here, for as Tuan (1991, pp. 684–685) observes, "… it is simply not possible to understand or explain the physical motions that produce place without overhearing, as it were, the speech—the exchange of words—that lie behind them." Along similar lines, Sarbin (1983) has observed that place identity requires the analysis of processes of 'emplotment'—the autobiographic rendering of self in terms of personal stories complete with plots, characters and, of course, physical and metaphoric settings. Although the humanist assumptions of this kind of position have not gone unchallenged, its influence can be detected in emerging work on the discursive construction of place identity. This examines how the narrative "positioning of someone who is *of* a place can connect a speaker to the multiple established meanings and identities of that place" (Taylor, 2003, p. 193; see also Dixon & Durrheim, 2000; Taylor, 2001).

Notwithstanding the conceptual, methodological and epistemological tensions that complicate (and enliven) the study of place identity, it is possible to discern a core set of processes in the literature. These processes have emerged across a variety of styles of research and may help to explain the concept's intuitive appeal. First, it is generally agreed that place identity is forged around a deep-seated familiarity with the environment, a sense of bodily, sensuous, social and autobiographic 'insideness' (Rowles, 1983) that arises as the result of individuals' habituation to their physical surroundings. Human geographers have used terms such as rootedness (Tuan, 1980) and existential insideness (Relph, 1976) to capture important dimensions of this intimate, often unreflective, knowledge of the environment. Second, and closely related, place identity is defined by what Proshansky (1978) called an affective-evaluative component. This finds expression within individuals' preferences for, or sense of emotional belonging to, particular environments. It takes the form of a "psychological investment

with a setting that has developed over time" (Vaske & Corbin, 2001, p. 17) and that is captured in the everyday phrases such as feeling 'at home' or having a 'sense of place'.

These processes of familiarity and attachment underwrite a third component of place identity, which concerns how material environments may come to express or symbolise the self. The most obvious illustration of this process concerns the personalisation of the home, as enacted, for example, through the décor, design and everyday use of residential dwellings. As de Certeau once observed, such dwellings must generally be protected from 'indiscreet glances' precisely because they may reveal too much about the identity of their inhabitants! However, this dimension of place identity can operate at a collective as well as an individual level and at socio-spatial scales beyond the home or the neighbourhood (cf. Cuba & Hummon, 1993; Bonaiuto, Breakwell, & Canto, 1996; Devine-Wright & Lyons, 1997; Uzzell, Pol, & Badenas, 2002). For instance, places may express a collective sense of nationhood, acting as symbolic repositories of national values (Jackson and Penrose, 1993) and historical referents for the continuity and distinctiveness of self (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996).

A fourth and final theme in the place identity literature concerns the role of physical environments in enabling the achievement of identity-relevant projects. Indeed, Korpela (1989) has defined place identity in precisely these terms—as a set of cognitions about physical settings *through which* individuals are to able regulate the self. By actively and imaginatively 'appropriating' their physical surroundings, he argues, individuals are able to create environments where the goals of self-coherence, self-worth and self-expression can be pursued. By the same token, the capacity of particular environments to facilitate self-regulation is vital to understanding their incorporation within individuals' identity. This idea is evidenced by research on the so-called 'restorative qualities' of places, which include, for example, their capacity to detach individuals from the boring or stressful routines (*getting or being away*), to provide a sense of emotional, spiritual, intellectual and aesthetic engagement (*fascination*), and to enable the achievement personal desires, tastes, goals and other forms of self-expression (*compatibility*) (see Korpela, 1992; Korpela, Hartig, Kaiser, & Fuhrer, 2001). Places that are restorative in these senses also tend to maximise opportunities for self-regulation and invoke a strong sense of place identity.

The rather potted overview presented above does not do justice to the rich variety of work on place–identity. However, it may be sufficient to advance two points that are relevant to our argument in the rest of this paper. The first point concerns the concept of human–environment relations underlying work on place–identity.

Rather than treating material environments as inert backgrounds to social life, as is the case in the psychological literature on desegregation, such work treats them as landscapes of meaning within which individuals and groups may establish rich social and psychological connections. Concepts such as place attachment, sense of place, belonging, familiarity, and self-regulation sensitise us to processes that have profound relevance to understanding who we are and how we construct social reality. Moreover, as we shall presently illustrate through the use of empirical materials, they provide an opportunity to integrate work in environmental psychology with work on contact and desegregation.

Our second and closely related point concerns the interrelation between place–identity and processes of social change. If, as the place–identity literature suggests, material environments not only underpin but also become *part of* the self, then two implications for social change follow. On the one hand, place–identity processes may motivate efforts to transform material environments, an idea anticipated in Proshansky et al. (1983) article and noted by many other commentators. Individuals will endeavour either to alter 'discrepant' environments so that they become compatible with their place–identities or, if this is impossible, to avoid such environments altogether. Proshansky et al. (1983) called this the 'mediating change' function of place identity. On the other hand, the transformation of material environments may be construed as a *disruption* to established place identities and strenuously resisted for this reason. In Section 4, we will argue that the latter process is axiomatic to understanding how 'insiders' evaluate events of desegregation.

4. Desegregation as the 'dislocation' of place–identity

Place identity is sometimes described as an implicit psychological structure. In the course of everyday life, we tend to overlook its significance because our place behaviour and sense of 'being in place' unfolds largely without conscious reflection. However, at moments of change or transition, when the bond between person and place is threatened, the significance of place identity becomes apparent. Loss of place tends to provoke strong social and psychological responses precisely because it entails a loss of self. We will use the general term 'dislocation' to designate the constellation of meanings that are conventionally associated with such responses.

Providing a stark example, Fullilove (1996) has discussed the psychological consequences of displacement, an event in which individuals or communities are dislodged from their homes via catastrophes such as wars, colonization, famines, natural disasters, and

destitution (see also Fried, 2002; Becker, 2003; Milligan, 2003 for relevant discussions). Fullilove argues that the trauma of such events arises, at least in part, from a disruption of the place and identity relationship. Displacement, in effect, undermines the social psychological processes discussed in the previous section. First, it undermines individuals' sense of place familiarity and 'insideness' by removing them from accustomed surroundings. Second, it undermines individuals' sense of place attachment and belonging by violating the 'mutual care-taking bond between a person and a beloved place.'' (Fullilove, 1996, p. 1516). Third, it undermines the very capacity of places symbolise central aspects of self by disrupting 'place–referent continuity' (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996); i.e. a place's ability to signify our identity by acting as a stable reference point for experience, values, relations and actions (see also Hay, 1998).

Not surprising, victims' lived experiences of displacement can be devastating and have been characterised as a form of grief (Fried, 1963). Fullilove discusses, for example, how this kind of event occasions a profound sense of *disorientation*, as individuals are forced to adjust to alien surroundings or to return to a place that has been profoundly altered. She points out that this experience is not merely cognitive and emotional in character. It also takes the form of a 'bodily' confusion as the corporeal routines, gestures and orientations that once gave meaning to life-in-place have been eradicated. Displacement may also lead to a powerful sense of place *nostalgia*, expressed via a 'bitter sweet' yearning for a cherished environment that has been relinquished, lost or destroyed (cf. Milligan, 2003). Thus, for example, years after being displaced by apartheid authorities, former residents of the communities such as District Six in Cape Town and Sophia Town in Johannesburg have reported an emotional longing for a lost but remembered place (Kruger, 1992; Hart & Pirie, 1984). Alternatively, displaced individuals may come to feel a growing sense of *alienation* from a place that has been violated, degraded, or appropriated by others. Under such circumstances, a place that was formerly central to self may lose its capacity to provide identity-related meaning and value. At the same time, displaced people may struggle to construct a sense of 'home' elsewhere, living with a perpetual sense of being 'out-of-place or excluded. This is a further expression of place alienation.

Although her focus is primarily on the psychiatric implications of displacement as a form of personal 'trauma', in our view Fullilove's discussion is also relevant to understanding intergroup dynamics. As we shall illustrate through an analysis of interview materials, for example, events of racial desegregation may generate social psychological reactions that are analogous to those she describes. Yet why is this the case? Why might the presence of one group in a hitherto segregated environment undermine its capacity to signify another group's identity?

In order to begin to answer such questions, we need to appreciate two aspects of the relationship between place and identity that have not been widely discussed in the environmental psychology literature. The first is that place identity processes, however individual they may appear, are powerfully shaped by the history of relations between groups. Places engender collective as well as individual forms of attachment (Hay, 1998) and, as such, are the often object of power struggles over spatial inclusion and exclusion. The second, and closely related, aspect is that place identity processes are ideological in a wide variety of ways. They reflect and maintain systems of ethnic and racial classification; they normalize practices of division; they preserve sectional interests and distributive inequalities; and they justify discriminatory ways of appropriating and regulating social space (cf. Keith & Pile, 1993).

Arguably the clearest illustration of the intergroup and ideological aspects of place identification is reflected in the psychology of 'belonging'. Belonging is typically conceived and researched in the place–identity literature as an individualistic phenomenon: it designates a personal sense of being 'at home' in particular places. In many respects, this is a perfectly valid and legitimate formulation. Belonging undoubtedly has an intensely personal dimension, for it emerges partly as a result of autobiographic experiences, relations and memories within a place. However, belonging is also a group response, wed to the history of ethnic and racial relations and inflected to its core by political struggles over space and place. Indeed, its very definition is often based around a distinction between insiders and outsiders, our space and their space. Accordingly, however dismal the statement sounds, an integral part of feeling 'at home' may derive from the comforting realization of others' *absence,* as well as from a *disidentification* with the places of others (Sibley, 1995; Cresswell, 1996).

This insight begins to clarify why desegregation might be experienced and evaluated as a form of 'dislocation', for, if the very meaning of the place and identity relationship is defined in terms of the absence of others (and all that they represent), then their presence becomes a form of place transgression. Desegregation may undermine the capacity of places to act as a ''…comfort zone where one can go about daily life in an identity affirming environment where there is little challenge to one's self-perceptions.'' (Ballard, 2002, p. 5). It may also hinder the ability of places to facilitate the project of self-regulation. By disrupting the continuity of physical environments, or interfering with their ability to act as a haven or escape, desegregation may reduce a place's capacity to act as a restorative environment of the self (Korpela, 1989).

Occasional glimpses of the significance of this process have surfaced in the literature on contact and desegregation, though they do not amount to a systematic treatment of the topic. Dixon and Reicher's (1997) research on residential relations in a newly desegregated village near Cape Town provides a relevant case study. They found that the very meaning of everyday contact in this setting was constructed in terms of struggle over belonging. Many of the white homeowners they interviewed, for example, viewed their black neighbours as 'squatters', newcomers whose presence was a threat not only to the rights of legitimate (white) homeowners, but also to the village's historical identity as a site of ecological and scenic beauty (see also Dixon, Foster, Durrheim, & Wilbraham, 1994; Dixon, Reicher, & Foster, 1997). Along similar lines, Fishman (1961) ended his discussion of residential desegregation in North America by reflecting on the social psychology of place. Attempting to understand the process of 'white flight' from desegregation, he suggested that researchers should attend to its perceived impact on suburban environments. Indeed, although he did not employ the term, this impact was cast as undermining the place–identity relationship:

In many ways modern American suburbs epitomize basic American cultural values and aspirations. The Jewish middle class and the rapidly growing Negro middle class eagerly pursue these values and this pursuit inevitably leads them into suburbia. However, their presence in suburbia is inimical to the very image of what a suburban community should be like. Jews and Negroes represent the city and all of the dirt, grime, haste, sweat and unloveliness of city life. Thus, their arrival not only lowers the status value of a neighborhood, but for many it also cancels the suburban image of a suburb. As long as flight to uncontaminated areas is possible and feasible, it will be resorted to (p. 50).

5. The present research: Place–identity and the desegregation of beaches in South Africa

5.1. Research context

The case study from which we will draw illustrative interview material investigated changing relations in Scottburgh, a coastal town located about 40 km south of Durban, South Africa, on KwaZulu-Natal's 'Sunshine Coast' (see Fig. 1 below). Scottburgh has a long history as a tourist destination and is popular destination for holiday-makers, particularly during the peak holiday season in December and January. At the present time, the beachfront and its surrounding environs are multiracial, but during the apartheid era, these areas where classified as 'whites only'. It was therefore illegal for members of other groups to enter the beach, swim in the sea, or use facilities such as the outdoor swimming pool or showers. Since the repeal of beach apartheid in 1989, the racial demography of the beachfront has become increasingly mixed, even if informal practices of segregation continue to limit the extent of cross-racial interaction between groups (Dixon & Durrheim, 2003).

Beaches such as Scottburgh are public spaces that are visited mainly for the purposes of recreation and
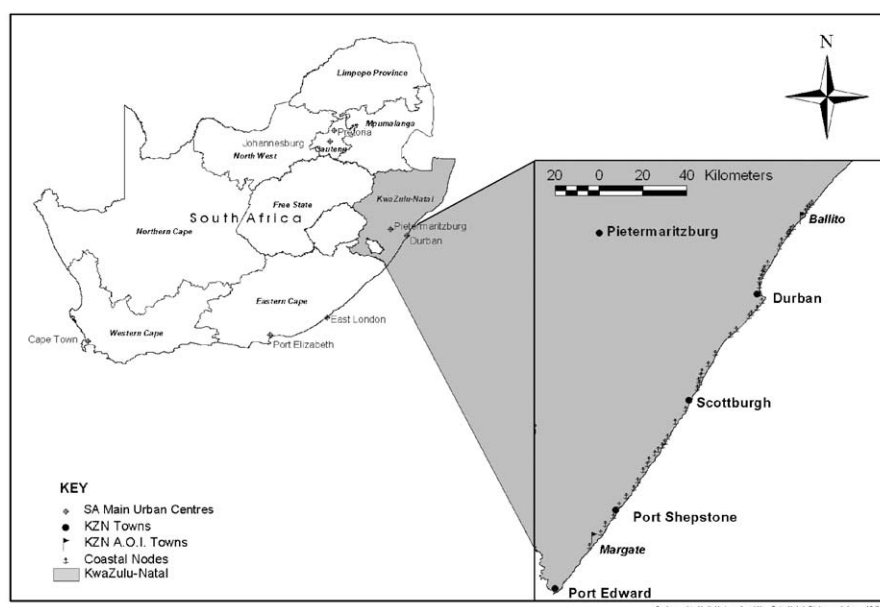

Fig. 1. Scottburgh on KwaZulu-Natal's coast, South Africa.

relaxation. At first glance, then, they are not a promising context in which to empirically explore the themes discussed in this paper. Whereas, for instance, residential areas may provoke intense attachments, acting as sites of collective and personal identity, beaches are accessible to all citizens and do not seem to provide much scope for 'territorial personalization' (Greenbaum & Greenbaum, 1981). It is worth bearing in mind, however, that the during the apartheid era South Africa's beaches were not only racially divided spaces, defined in terms of a variety of legal, symbolic and material boundaries (see Fig. 2); they were also designed to accommodate cultural traditions of holidaying that were themselves racial in their organization and significance. The implications of this fact only became clear to many South Africans when beach apartheid was officially abandoned in 1989 and the notorious 'whites only' signs were removed from places such as Scottburgh. In a relatively short period of time, beaches were transformed from racially exclusive to desegregated and multiracial spaces (see Fig. 3).

5.2. Interviews and analytic framework

In the rest of the paper, we will consider how visitors to Scottburgh evaluated this process of place transformation. Our data took the form of tape-recorded interviews that were conducted with a sample of holiday-makers who visited Scottburgh in December 1999 or in December 2001. Because they were conducted in situ (i.e. on the beach), these interviews were less formal than is often the case in academic research. The interviewer dressed in beach attire and sought to establish a relaxed rapport with respondents; there were many instances when he was referred to in colloquial terms indicating informality (e.g. 'boet'(brother), 'my man'). Each interview began with a general discussion of family holidays, during which respondents reflected on their holidays, especially how they had changed over the years. Interviewees were then asked a series of questions about the impact, if any, that desegregation had on their holidays and were invited to discuss emerging forms of contact on beaches. The interview schedule contained general questions about beach desegregation in South Africa (e.g. 'One of the ways that holidays have changed has involved the desegregation of the beaches. Has this process affected your holiday in any way? Do you think that the desegregation of beaches is good idea?'), as well as a series of more specific questions about social relations at Scottburgh (e.g. 'Have you had any contact with members of other race groups on the beachfront? What is it like sharing the beach with other groups?'). Although each interview was based around the same schedule of guiding questions, interviewees were encouraged to elaborate their views in an open-ended fashion.
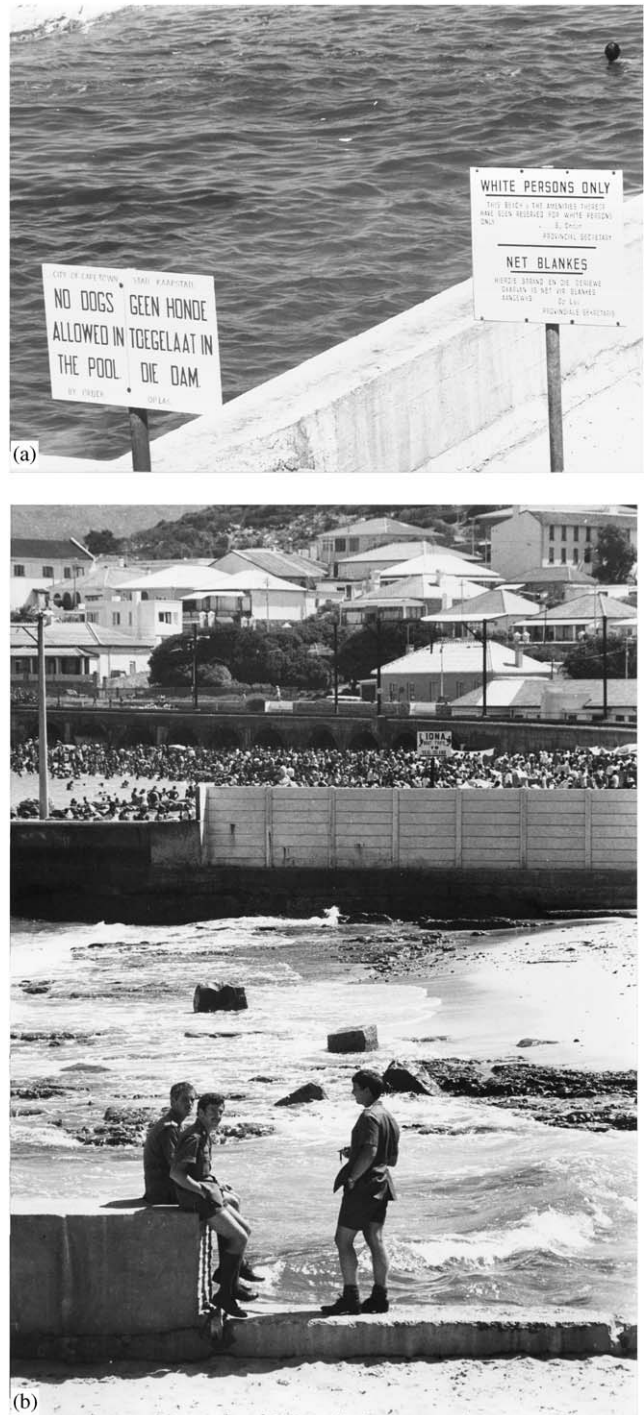

Fig. 2. The racial organisation of beaches during the apartheid era. *Note*: Photograph (a) shows a sign designating a 'whites only' section of a beach near Cape Town; Photograph b) shows territorial boundary between this beach and a 'non-white' beach (in the background) being policed by white guards (Copyright, G.Ellis).

In order to recruit participants for the study, the second author approached small groups of holiday-makers who were sitting together on the beach and invited them to participate in the research.

Fig. 3. Scottburgh as a desegregated space in the 'new' South Africa. *Note*: Photograph (a) shows holiday-makers enjoying Scottburgh's main strand on New Year's Day 2000; Photograph (b) shows a 'Hula Hoop' competition on the grass embankments overlooking the beachfront (Copyright, K. Durrheim and J. Dixon).

Although interviewees were not selected at random and do not constitute a representative sample of South Africans, some attempt was made to 'sample for diversity' (Patton, 1990). Our overall sample contained a mixture of genders and age groups. It was also multiracial, consisting of Indian ($n = 23$), black ($n = 46$) and white ($n = 51$) respondents. The present analysis concentrates on the accounts produced by white beachgoers, who have historically been the predominant group on Scottburgh and who must now share this formerly exclusive location with members of other groups. It is worth noting that the interviewer in this study was also a 'white' South African, a factor that may well have shaped the kinds of accounts of social change offered by our respondents. Indeed, as will become apparent, interactions between the interviewer and the interviewees often presupposed a common set of placed experiences and reactions.

Our analytic framework drew broadly on a discursive approach to understanding place identity processes (Bonaiuto and Bonnes, 2000; Dixon & Durrheim, 2000). To begin with, each interview was transcribed in full. Then, applying a discourse analytic methodology, we explored the content and rhetorical organization of respondents' accounts of desegregation. How was social change on Scottburgh's beachfront defined and evaluated and with what implications? What arguments were offered in support of particular constructions of the meaning of desegregation? As a result of this preliminary analysis, we came to focus on a set of accounts that portrayed desegregation as an event that undermined valued experiences of 'being-in-place'. Such accounts emerged in one form or another in all 51 of our interviews with white respondents. Often they featured explicitly, taking the form of stories[1] about the

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[1]The metaphor of *emplotment* (Sarbin, 1983) is an instructive one in

degradation of beaches or about our respondents' feelings of alienation from place. Sometimes they were expressed more implicitly in the form of metaphors of displacement (cf. Cresswell, 1997). For example, respondents related stories about the beaches being 'swamped' or 'overrun' or about their experiences of being 'pushed out'. In either event, our analysis aimed to explore how, and to what ends, the lived experience of desegregation was formulated in terms of a sense of *dislocation from place*.

It should be noted that this methodological approach does not reduce to a fixed recipe of steps; rather, it is based around the application of a more general set of orienting principles of textual analysis (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, 1994). The most important of these principles derives from the assumption that linguistic accounts of social life, including accounts of (the transformation of) place, are *reality-constructing*. Thus, in the analysis below, we do not treat respondents' stories of 'dislocation' simply as expressions of 'internal' reactions to environmental change. To the contrary, we treat such stories as exemplars of the discursive *practices through which* others' presence are actively *constructed* as a disruption to the place–identity relationship. As will become clear, such practices are interesting not least because they may operate to portray desegregation as an undesirable process, thereby warranting the necessity of new forms of racial isolation. The latter process illustrates a second fundamental concern of discourse analytic research, which holds that everyday accounts of social life are designed to accomplish social actions and to maintain interested versions of social reality (Edwards & Potter, 1992).

6. Analysis and discussion

6.1. 'Getting away from it all': The beach as a site of place–identity

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Extract 1

Interviewer:	Uhm so when you think of holidays vacations, in what what does it conjure

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(footnote continued)
this context. It highlights how individuals define the self through the constructive use of stories that have plots and characters, beginnings and endings, denouncements and moral messages, and, crucially, unfold in a variety of actual and symbolic settings (see also Gutting, 1996). As our interview extracts will make clear, such stories of the self are interactional and collective as well as personal constructions. They are formulated, for example, as members of a community jointly assess the implications of environmental change by drawing on shared symbols, metaphors and normative assumptions about the place and identity relationship.

	up? What do you what what meaning does sit have for you?
Martin:	Sunshiny days and sea like this
Interviewer:	Ja, it's wonderful hey?
Sue:	And, and a break from routine?
Interviewer:	A break from routine?
Sue:	Definitely a break from routine. Getting away from stress […]
Interviewer:	So how does it make you feel to be here?
Sue:	Relaxed
Martin:	Relaxed I don't even know what time of day it is
Sue:	Hhhh
Interviewer:	Hhhh
Sue:	Hhh you can see, I don't even wear a watch. You know it, it is just. I, I I think because of the complete break in routine. I mean we woke up this morning, we had coffee and biscuits. That was breakfast whereas at home you wake up you have porridge and you go to school and you go to work and you know everything's at a set time. It's just that total break in routine as well

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Extract 2

Doris:	The sea is the great attraction, and I mean the kids can climb the beaches, they can build sand castles they can just let their hair down. And it's lovely, all these colourful umbrellas and all that. It its lovely. It's just a nice vibe. It's a nice vibe. You know, the pool is fine, but the there's sun. The beach has got something definitely […] And you know what? When you're down here you don't feel as though you're racing against time. You're doing everything at your leisure. You're not rushing here, rushing there, oh, and I watching the clock and all this type of thing. That's what's that's what's so nice about going on holiday. And it doesn't matter
Solly:	It's time
Doris:	If you
Solly:	It's time to think hey? It's time to think about, you know don't
Doris:	Yes
Solly:	Do that at home. At home you do the gardening and work. You don't get time to sit. When you come and sit here you lay and you do nothing.

When you do nothing you mind starts working. If you work with your hands your mind's on the job. When you do nothing a normal guy, I'm not saying everybody, a normal guy starts to think and what's he going to do in the new year. If you reflect on the past but you also look at the future in a big way. A holiday is as well, I can sit here. I can watch the people for a while and my mind will go back to what I must do when I

Doris: I love it

Solly: Get back uhm reflect on the year past and Ah, I think it's

Doris: Nice, like lovely. You have to have that holiday once a year you have to definitely to unwind

Solly: But certainly holiday's one aspect of your of your pleasure that you're gonna enjoy and I think people will enjoy it. It doesn't matter what the political situation (Doris—ja) if that beach is full. I don't wanna share it with them then I will go to another one or I'll change my time. But holiday I will. That's what South Africans are like.

Interviewer: Absolutely (Doris—Hmm, ja hh)

Solly: You know that ad they used to have a whole lot, what is it? Sunshine, braaivleis and Chevrolet or something. It is just that, South Africans are creatures of holiday. They love

Doris: Ja, they are you don't find that in other countries, hey?

Interviewer: Well, Irish I mean don't, They they think we're crazy to sit here in the sun

Doris: Yes

Solly: And they say it's dangerous, deadly

Interviewer: It is

Doris: Ok look maybe it is, but like my one friend says she loves tanning, she says she'll die with a smile on her face.

Extract 3

Interviewer: What do you think is the appeal of the coming to the sea? Why do you think the sea, the coast

Mitch: When you live in the Transvaal I just think the water and swimming in the waves. And you're kind of involved in nature. I don't know, it's a good question. You're fighting the elements, you go out there and swim, catch body surf, come out you're exhausted, lie down, read a book again, have another cold drink and half an hour later you're back in the water And it's like we, part of it you know, one of the things I said to Paddy just before we came down, we probably need a good swim in the sea to clean everything out. I shouldn't tell too many people that but just I think seawater. There is some magic about seawater

Interviewer: So if you If you think about your vacations from when you were young a young man until you know, now have you seen historical change in patterns where you go, what you do?

Mitch: No not really. I go, I always go back, go back to all my holidays have just about been down at the sea. I I would my annual vacation. Probably wouldn't be at a game park for instance. That would be an experience or an excursion. It wouldn't be a place where I can have a Fanta tin next to you with a book and look at watch, sit and watch people for hours a day go for a swim and sit and watch people that's that's quite hard work going to a game park. Sitting there focussing is nice, different It is different. But there is, I don't know if you relax there. I think you come home to relax. This is relaxing. This to me is relaxing. Sitting without my shirt on in my cossie everybody around me doing their own thing, relaxing. All my history goes back all the various places we've been to Durban, Cintsa, East London even Cape Town cause we were at the beach. All the holidays, we went away every Christmas in a caravan with my folks and never stayed in hotels and things, couldn't afford that kind of stuff. Always had been at the beach, somewhere. Down the coast, up the coast, always

Interviewer: And you carried that on

Mitch: Ja, just carried it on. And maybe I learned from my dad you know, that he enjoyed relaxing as well. He just used to lie on the beach and read a book. Same sort of thing and I think parent is quite strong you know but I've realized that I enjoy to be relaxed and I'll go home and this afternoon as a real slob, probably, and climb on my

> bed and read my book, just cause I
> know I've got to go back to the new
> year. It's another year.

We have quoted these interview extracts at length because they capture—in considerable detail and eloquence—an image of the beach as an arena of identity. They give a sense of the rich narrative process through which our interviewees formulated their sense of 'being in place'. Rather than a neutral background to social relations, the environment portrayed here clearly possesses a deep emotional and symbolic significance for its inhabitants. Indeed, it is not an exaggeration to find evidence here of what the human geographer Yi Tuan famously called 'topophillia' … love of place. How else might we explain references to 'sunshiny days and sea like this' (extract 1); the 'magic' and 'cleansing' qualities of the seawater (extract 3); the 'lovely' sight of children climbing the beaches and building sandcastles amidst colourful umbrellas (extract 2)? The language reveals a deep sense of place attachment.

Part of the significance of the beach for the interviewees clearly arises as a result of its discursive contrast with other places. It is a setting that quite literally lies outside the normal frame of reference in which their lives unfold, existing as a 'place on the margins' (Shields, 1991). On the one hand, the beach is accorded a distinctive logic of time: it is end of year rather than everyday, leisurely rather rushed, flexible rather than timetabled. Above all, it institutes a break from the humdrum rhythms of day-to-day living by providing a context in which temporal experience is transfigured, where one does not have to be constantly 'watching the clock' (extract 2). On the other hand, the beach is defined in terms of a sustained contrast with other places, expressed in terms of recurring dualisms such as urban/natural, home/away, ordered/carefree, work/play, and stressful/relaxed. Ordinary life in urban centres such as the Witswatersrand and Johannesburg is often located in a stressful environment, being marked by the pressures of city life. The beach, by contrast, represents a complete "break from routine" (extract 1).

This image of the beach as a place of escape was a recurring theme in white interviewees' accounts of holidaying at Scottburgh. It was the quality of place that they esteemed most highly, often being cited as their reason for coming to the beachfront in the first place. This is unsurprising. As the work of Korpela and his colleagues has demonstrated, places' ability to facilitate an escape from banality is part of what enables them to act as 'restorative' environments (Korpela, 1989; Korpela et al., 2001). Thus, in all of our extracts, the beach is cast as an arena where people can engage in 'ways of being' denied to them in ordinary life. They can get 'away from stress" (extract 1), and "just sit and do nothing" and "reflect on past but […] also look to the future" (extract 2). In the afternoon, following a morning's swimming, body-surfing, and 'fighting the elements', they can be 'slobs' who retire to bed to read books (extract 3). In short, on the beach, people can assume a more relaxed identity than is usually the case.

It is not just as a space of personal regulation, relaxation and escape that the beachfront acted as a context for selfhood for our respondents. In visiting and engaging with places such as Scottburgh, they were also able to maintain the forms of 'insideness' and belonging that constitute their own place identity (Rowles, 1983). This process is perhaps illustrated most clearly in extract 3 in which Mitch reflects upon the autobiographic significance of vacations by the sea. On one level, this significance has to do with a set of embodied and geographically situated rituals, e.g. sitting with a can of Fanta, going for a swim and watching people 'for hours a day', or reclining shirtless and in a 'cossie'. Through these small, highly familiar gestures, Mitch is able to (re)establish a sense of 'being in place'. On another level, such acts help him to relive a family tradition of holidays along the coast and to recall the kinds of things that he and his father once did together. Place and identity are connected through the twin processes of doing and remembering, which are fashioned into a coherent narrative of the self. In our view, it is no exaggeration to discern a poetic quality in the process (cf. Sarbin, 1983).

The theme of belonging finds another, perhaps less obvious, expression in extracts 1–4, which enriches and overlays its autobiographic dimension. This has to do with the beach's status as a site for celebrating cultural values and forms of life that define the shared identity of white South Africans, illustrating what Uzzell, Pol, and Badenas (2002) have labeled 'place-related social identity'. The closing lines of extract 2 provide a clear example of a process that tinctured many of our interview accounts. Here Solly and Doris reflect on the role of the beach as a site not only *of* but also *for* the expression of (white) South African identity. As Solly points out, South Africans are 'creatures of the holiday'. They belong on the beach because the beach encapsulates defining features of their culture and way of life: "sunshine, braaivleis[2] and Chevrolet". Unlike members of other nationalities—the shade-loving Irish for example—South Africans were born to tan under a blazing sun. And if this means exposure to dangerous levels of radiation, then so be it. To adapt Doris's closing anecdote, time spent on a beach may be hazardous to our health, but at least we can die with a smile on our face.

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[2]'Braavleis' is the local word for a barbecue.

In such stories, the operation of another form of belonging can be detected, an experience grounded in a sense of 'we' in 'our space'. This type of attachment arises not only through individuals' personal relations to a given environment, but also through a shared sense of how places are cradles for collective 'being' and 'doing'. At the same time, almost inevitably, we find a corresponding awareness of others' presence in 'our' space. Thus, in the course of describing the importance of the holiday to South Africans, Doris mentions in passing a threat to its integrity, a threat that derives from the 'political situation' and from the simple fact that 'if that beach is full, I don't wanna share it with them'. The dislocation of the relationship between place and identity is thus brought into view.

6.2. 'You can't just relax on the beach': Desegregation as the dislocation of place identity

In the previous section, we explored some of the ways in which white South Africans holidaying at Scottburgh described their sense of place. We suggested that the beachfront was defined as a space for getting away from mundane life, remembering autobiographic connections to past holidays, expressing an individual and collective sense of belonging, and simply 'being' a more relaxed kind of person. In this section, we shall trace the relevance of such place–identity processes for understanding white respondents' reactions to the desegregation of Scottburgh and similar destinations along KwaZulu-Natal's 'Sunshine Coast'. Specifically, by extending Fullilove's (1996) reflections on the consequences of displacement, we shall illustrate how desegregation may foster a sense of place alienation and prompt a nostalgic longing for lost ways of being-in-place among white respondents.

Extract 4

Interviewer:	What does it mean to you? Going on holiday, going away?
Gavin:	Well uhm the ability to relax and be at ease. You know like now you're not at ease now you're being swamped. You know that's that's it. You go to a place where there's no trouble. That's basically it. Did you know we thought we'd come here today and spend a peaceful, quiet day and look at it
Interviewer:	You know, there's quite a few people packing up and going.
Gavin:	We went to Durban yesterday it was also the same. Nothing happened this morning
Anne:	I know, to actually get away from all this I know I'm so shocked because

we've never ever been here on New Years' day though we've been here on a normal holiday it's never been like this. This time uhm we're pretty shocked you know that er at the the amount of blacks down here and they they destroyed everything so they can't even buy a cool drink […]

Gavin:	That's the biggest thing when it's people want to go on holiday where it's safe, where there's no crime. Where you know you can go and relax with your kids on holiday That's the big thing, as a father you know?
Interviewer:	Ja. So, like really it's a place. It's ye.ye.ye you look for a place where you can relax (Gavin—yes, hm) And
Gavin:	I know for teenagers got their jolling places you know you guys you go and you that's by all means. They they they got these spots where they go but you know, you know the family's gonna come you just lie and relax in the sun, spend time together

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Extract 5

Interviewer:	Ja, looking around here I can't see many blacks there's not there are some black people. How do you feel about that?
Jim:	As long as they're quiet and give you space. That's not a problem
Marie:	All right
Interviewer:	It's all right, hey? (Jim—ja)
Marie:	It's when they start you know, eve:n you know we were at u:m North Beach last week and it was and it was horrible. It really was. They they just came there with their parties and loud music. And they just took over and it was horrible and we went away because it was just no fun
Jim:	You want your space hey
Marie:	And the kids. You you you can't even— this little one went to the to the to the tap to go and wash her feet and they wanted to take her. Someone said "Come with me. Come with me". Anne had to run up there
Jim:	You got to keep an eye on your kids all day
Anne:	Martha

Marie:	She had to run up there and fetch her child. You know you got to be so careful. You can't just relax on the beach

Extract 6

Mary:	And also personally I want to with wild. I want to be in a natural situation. I don't wanna be with music blaring. And the wilder it is, the whole, generally all of us
Peter:	Want a bit of peace and quiet.
Mary:	Ja, we want to be in nature. We don't want to be like in at the waterfront, by the sea, you know
Hilda:	We've never, we've never to Durban beach anyway so (Mark—ja, ja) The one time I objected why, well not objected but didn't feel comfortable was in Cape Town last December. Or early January. Just the litter. On the beach you know? made me feel a bit vulnerable Always I seemed to have to look for quiet beaches (Mary—ja) Anyway
Mary:	Ja we don't really go for for rainbow type of beaches

Extracts 4–6 illustrate one construction of dislocation that was associated with the desegregation of beaches. The general theme of these extracts is a well-worn one in the social psychological literature on contact and desegregation (cf. Stephan & Stephan, 1985): white discomfort over, and anxiety about, a noticeable black presence. However, closer inspection of the accounts reveals that in this case discomfort reflects not only concerns about the safety of self, family or property, or concerns about the possibility of interacting with others; it is also conceived as disruptive to particular ways of being in place. Thus, Gavin and Anne's complaints about 'being swamped' are based partly around the loss of their 'ability to relax and be at ease' and to spend a 'peaceful, quiet day' at Scottburgh (extract 4). Similarly, in extracts 5 and 6, speakers' concerns about loud music, parties, squalor, and children's safety are ultimately framed in terms of an experiential loss of place. Marie notes, for example, her growing inability to 'just relax on the beach'. In extract 6, the theme of desegregation is somewhat submerged until the closing lines where Mary concedes her family to 'don't really go for […] rainbow type of beaches'. For most of the extract 'race' is formulated in coded terms such as 'crowding', 'litter' and 'blaring' music. However, once again, we would argue that interviewees' feelings of vulnerability are associated with a disruption of their sense of place. Over

the course of the extract, for instance, the interview group elaborate their ideal beach as being a 'natural', 'quiet', 'wild' and 'peaceful' space. This ideal is contrasted both implicitly and explicitly with the multiracial beaches of the 'new' South Africa, which they avoid.

To make this point in different terms: we are suggesting that desegregation was interpreted by our white respondents as undermining the beach's status as a restorative environment for them (Korpela, 1992). As we noted previously, for many white holiday-makers the point of coming to the beach was to become a more laid back type of person, to escape the stressed environment of the city and to unwind after a hard year. In practice, this experience was grounded in particular ways of appropriating and imagining space. It involved communing with the natural scenery without noisy or unmannerly disruptions; resting on the beachfront without feeling crowded or pushed out; letting the kids play freely without fear of abduction; and taking a dip in the ocean without being watchful of one's possessions. The desegregation of beaches was perceived as problematic precisely because it undermined these expressions of *located subjectivity*. Instead of allowing white holiday-makers to 'get away from it all', it forced them to confront it all, even *here* in the sandy, sunny, carefree spaces of the family holiday ….

Extract 7

Merle:	I don't allow them to go I have to go with them because I'm worried for their safety. I'm worried for my safety when I go for a walk I don't carry a cell phone and
Jackson:	You can't just walk
Merle:	Nowadays when I go into town like down here we're on holiday we're much more relaxed
Jackson:	She can't just walk with your bag, your cell phone, your pu:rse
Merle:	I can't just walk with my handbag over my shoulders shops
Jackson:	You've got to really, you've got to be aware of
Merle:	When the kids go to the shops by themselves everything around you all the time
Merle:	When I went on a family holiday my parents would set up and we would go. We'd go into town and go there and go the Wimpy and smoke on the sly and we can never!
Interviewer:	The whole time, ja
Jackson:	I suppose we've got to give them a time to like how long does it take to smoke

a cigarette? (Merle: hh) You've got to let them disappear for at least ten minutes.

Interviewer: But within certain bounds (Jackson: ja/ja) I suppose you can sort of

Merle: And when I we used to come to the beach you used to bring your food and goodies and leave it lying there .hh and go and sit and not you know you there was just an unwritten law. People didn't touch your things.

Extract 8

Shirely: [...] we won't go to some places in any case to go and have a holiday there definitely not

Interviewer: Which kind of places?

Shirley: Durban for instance (Interviewer: Durban?) ja

Interviewer: But Durban used to the the main

Shirley: Absolutely! tourist attraction that's where people used to go Durban

Patrick: Ja/ja/ja

Shirley: We spent our honeymoon thirty-five years ago there in Durban but we won't go to Durban now .hh we went to Durban on Wednesday? Last week

Patrick: Ja and we (drive) right through it (Shirley: ja) to see what's it like but

Shirley: You can't stop even

Patrick: Ja, it's very busy and very black

Shirley: No, it's not nice at all

Interviewer: Ja/ja/ja/ja

Shirley: Definitely not

Along similar lines, desegregation was constructed by other white interviewees as dislocating their autobiographic, familial and collective sense of attachment to place. This theme was articulated primarily in terms of a narrative of decline in which the exodus of white holiday-makers from their traditional beaches was lamented or past holiday experiences were contrasted nostalgically with the present 'realities' of relations on Scottburgh. In extract 7, for instance, concerns over family safety are ultimately rooted in a story about the loss of a particular way of appropriating place. When Merle and Jackson came on holiday with their parents during the apartheid era, they were able to engage in adolescent rites of passage such as smoking 'on the sly' and to leave 'food and goodies' strewn casually on the beach. In the desegregated beaches of the 'new' South Africa, by contrast, these practices are denied to (white) families. Teenagers must be kept on a tight rein, possessions carefully guarded. In extract 8 we find a similar tale of the disruption to the connection between

people and place. As Shirley explains, Durban was once the premier destination for holiday-makers (see Fig. 1 above), who would spend their annual vacations on the Golden Mile, a racially exclusive stretch of beach running parallel to the city center. Indeed, it was where Shirley and her husband honeymooned in the mid-1960s during the heyday of apartheid. In the post-apartheid era, however, all of that has changed. For Shirley and Patrick, Durban is now a place that one speeds 'right through' rather than a place for holidaying or honeymooning.

We would argue, then, that these accounts point to a disruption of 'place–referent continuity' (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). Beaches that were once a stable reference point for white respondents' located subjectivity have been changed and, as a result, an accustomed sense of connection to place has been ruptured (Durrheim & Dixon, 2001). For this reason, we can find evidence here of the kinds of responses that Fullilove (1996) attributed to events of displacement. On the one hand, both accounts are marked by a growing *alienation* from a place to which the speakers' previously had strong attachments. On the other hand, one can detect, particularly in extract 9, a *nostalgia* for the places of the past, expressed via reminiscences about holidays past. It is important to note that these reactions do not simply reflect a perceived disruption of an autobiographic connection to place. Although the accounts certainly have an autobiographic dimension, expressing experiences that are personal to the interviewees, they also illustrate a sense of dislocation that is collective in character, expressing an awareness of both the history of intergroup relations in South Africa and its relationship to the power struggle over space. Thus, when Shirley describes Durban as a place "where people used to go", she displays a racialised knowledge of the historical geography of the family holiday in South Africa and of the territorial forms of belonging it maintained. She hearkens back to a time when thousands of white tourists would annually make the pilgrimage from South Africa's interior to the vacation on the 'Golden Mile' and similar locations along the Northern coastline of KwaZulu Natal. Desegregation has, she explains, eradicated that cultural and racial tradition by irrevocably changing the character of place. The transformation is cast in terms that elide the distinction between race and space. Durban has to them become 'very black'.

As the latter statement demonstrates all too starkly, narratives about the loss of place identity are not merely transparent 'expressions' of a personal trauma. They are also highly politicised constructions that may serve to justify, normalise or challenge particular kinds of human–environment relationships (cf. Barnes, Auburn & Lea, 1998; Dixon & Durrheim, 2000). Indeed, the

narrative design of accounts such as extracts 7 and 8, which establishes a discontinuity between past (good) and present (bad) forms of located subjectivity, might equally be read as a rhetorical design, which enables the speakers to argue that beach desegregation is a problematic policy. By contrasting their children's restrictions with the freedoms they once enjoyed on family holidays, for example, Merle and Jackson are able to question the consequences of desegregation on Scottburgh, which in turn warrants the necessity of new practices of surveillance and suspicion. Similarly, by hearkening back to Durban's supposedly sparkling history as a (white) tourist attraction and a romantic venue for their honeymoon, Shirley and Patrick are better able to justify their decision to drive 'right through it' in the post-apartheid era. The discontinuity between place and self thereby provides a justificatory scheme for rejecting the desegregation of place.

To put this point in different terms, we are suggesting that local and personal narratives of dislocation in Scottburgh can also be viewed as part of the longer story of race ideology in South Africa, an ideology that historically has legitimated exclusive forms of place belonging and entitlement and that continues to shape everyday life in this society (see, for example, Foster, 2000; Hook & Vrodljak, 2002; Popke & Ballard, 2004). There are several examples of this process in the accounts we have presented. We hardly need to point out, for example, the ramifications of place constructions in which the degree of blackness is constructed as a symbolic barometer of the desirability of particular places and grounds in itself for their avoidance (extract 8). What this kind of overtly racist formulation should not disguise, however, are the more subtle ways in which accounts of dislocation service racial ideology. For instance, accounts of how littering on the 'rainbow beaches' of the new South Africa makes one feel 'vulnerable' or about how crowded beaches are simply not the kind of 'natural' environment that one favours on holiday (extract 6) may seem far removed from the geopolitics of desegregation. Yet we would argue that even these apparently nonracial formulations of the experience of self-in-place are loaded with racial significance. They serve to objectify, and thus reproduce, racial stereotypes (e.g. about pollution, threat, crowding) by inscribing them as features of multiracial spaces. In the process, they turn racial avoidance into a matter of personal place preference, quietly justifying the traffic of white families away from traditional holiday venues and along the country's coastlines in search of destinations that are desired as much for what is absent as for what is present. In these ways, too, constructing the relationship between place and identity is a political activity.

6.3. 'I think that's beautiful': Desegregation as inclusion, entitlement and identity enrichment

The main goal of our analysis has been to explore how white holiday-makers constructed desegregation as a form of 'dislocation': an event that compromises a place's capacity to serve as an arena for self-expression and regulation. Although it has clarified an important aspect of resistance to social change, our analysis has been limited in at least one crucial respect. It has focused almost exclusively on the (overwhelmingly negative) evaluations offered by white visitors to Scottburgh. By way of conclusion, and in order to provide a revealing counterpoint, we shall briefly consider a different set of constructions of changing relations there.

Extract 9

Bongi:	[…] as we know that beaches are now opened to everyone, for all races to unite and live happily. And the other thing is for other races to see how far distanced we can be to each other. I think we black people like the idea because we have been abused a lot, but whites don't like to get together with blacks that causes them to run away from us
Interviewer:	As we heard from the other sister can you take your family to spend their holiday in a beach with many whites?
Bongeka:	The way we feel free we blacks after being enslaved for such a long time, I can take my family to spend their holiday in any place they want to go to no matter what.

Extract 10

Interviewer:	I was about to ask you, as you remember that blacks were not allowed here but as time went on that law was changed, everyone was allowed. How do you see that? Is it good or it is bad?
Vuyisile:	I think that's beautiful. It's very nice that we no longer have a place where we are not allowed, but other people are allowed. I wonder what they would do if there were some places where they were not allowed into. I think it is a good thing that we have been allowed. That all of us are together as it is happening now. I think it is very good. No I think it's beautiful
Interviewer:	What do you think sister? Do you think that is a good idea or not?

Zodwa: I think it is a good idea but if I look around I notice that they run away from us. They have go to other beaches to swim there. They are no longer in great numbers as they used to be. It is a good thing to us but it is a bad thing for them as you can see they are not here. They have ran away.

Extracts 9 and 10 are taken from interviews conducted with black families on Scottburgh's beachfront.[3] What is immediate evident here is that desegregation is defined as a positive and enriching experience, which, in removing the barriers erected by the apartheid state (see Fig. 2 above), has opened up the beaches for everyone to enjoy. The central theme of these extracts is not dislocation but liberation. Thus, both sets of interviewees describe the new sense of freedom and inclusion they have experienced by spending time in places that where previously denied to black people. In this context, white withdrawal from interracial contact on the beachfront is constructed as a problematic activity. Whereas white interviewees tended to define this process in terms of metaphors of displacement, such as 'being swamped' (extract 4), black interviewees spoke critically of whites tendency to 'run away' from contact. Indeed, this reaction was generally cast as symptomatic of an irrational fear of black people or a refusal to accept the implications of South Africa's new multiracial democracy.

Three general points can be taken from even this brief glimpse of alternative constructions of the meaning of social change at Scottburgh. First, they demonstrate how desegregation may be attributed with positive and identity-enhancing environmental meanings as well as negative environmental meanings. For instance, desegregation may be conceived as extending territorial entitlements or increasingly the possibilities for social unity. As Bongi observes, "…beaches are now opened to everyone, for all races to unite and live happily" (extract 9). The second point concerns the relative nature of collective experiences of desegregation. In societies such South Africa, where segregation was a fundamental means of securing privilege, it is hardly surprising that different groups hold radically divergent interpretations of this process. This idea is starkly borne out by our interview data. While all of our white interviewees constructed the desegregation of beaches as problematic in one way or another, our black inter-

viewees almost invariably emphasized what they had gained from the transformation of places such as Scottburgh. Third, and by implication, it is worth reiterating that dislocation is not an inevitable, normal or natural response that is automatically 'cued' by objective changes in the material environment. To the contrary, it is a strategic and often political *construction* that arises through a community's ongoing practices for evaluating environmental change. In the context of social change at Scottburgh, the problem with such practices is not only that they express racial prejudice or invite a reduction in interracial contact. In addition, as the interviewees in extracts 9 and 10 recognise only too well, they justify forms of avoidance that ultimately undermine the very concept of integrated space.

7. Conclusions

Psychological research on desegregation can be reinterpreted as a sustained argument about the political geography of relations between groups. Time and again, its proponents have indicted societies built around the geopolitics of division and have called, often passionately, for a sweeping desegregation of social life. However, in advancing such claims, they have often employed a limited conception of the material environments in which these changes are meant to apply. Too frequently they have treated such environments merely as passive receptacles of our relationships or at best as settings whose design may affect the frequency of intergroup contact.

In this paper, we have outlined the beginnings of an alternative approach. On a general level, we have advocated a shift from a minimalist conception of social space to a conception in which the material environment is reconceived as a 'landscape of meaning' that actively shapes everyday relations and experiences during processes of desegregation. More specifically, drawing on environmental psychological research on place–identity, we have argued that desegregation can alter not simply the relationship between self and other, but also the relationship between self and place. In so far as it is conceived as disrupting processes of place attachment, belonging and familiarity, desegregation may invoke a profound sense of *dislocation*—expressed, for example, within accounts of place alienation, nostalgia and disorientation. Thus, the interviews we conducted with 'white' holiday-makers at Scottburgh were replete with arguments about the degradation of the beach as a site of the holiday. For them, desegregation was constructed in terms of a loss of located subjectivity: an inability to relax on the beach, charge the batteries, and engage in other practices of self-regulation. In other words, our white respondents made us acutely aware of one incontrovertible consequence of the fall of beach apartheid,

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[3]Interviews with black beachgoers followed the procedures outlined in our method section, but were conducted in Zulu by a Zulu-speaking research assistant (a postgraduate psychology student at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal). Each interview was transcribed in Zulu before being re-transcribed into English for the purposes of analysis.

namely that the 'restorative' (Korpela, 1992) spaces of the white family vacation have been forever transformed. On the rainbow beaches of the new South Africa, racially exclusive forms of belonging, insideness, and self-expression are difficult, if not impossible, to sustain.

The main message of this article, then, is that the psychology of desegregation is interconnected with the psychology of place. This message has implications for understanding social change in contexts other than that represented by Scottburgh. If anything, the place–identity processes we have documented may have greater relevance in other kinds of environments, where territorial attachments may be more enduring and intense. Future research on contact and desegregation might therefore be fruitfully 'conjoined' with work in environmental psychology (cf. Taylor, 1983) in order to develop the line of analysis we have introduced. The benefits of this enterprise may flow both ways, for the problem of desegregation brings into sharper focus aspects of place identity that have been somewhat under-specified in the environmental psychological literature. Notably, it highlights not only the collective but also the *intergroup* dimension of concepts such as belonging and attachment. It thus moves towards an understanding of place identity as a process that is shaped by power struggles to differentiate and control social space, encouraging environmental psychologists to recover its wider political and historical context (see also Manzo, 2003; Possick, 2004).

This idea returns us to the problem on which the article opened, which concerns the apparent tenacity of informal segregation as a system for ordering social life. As we suggested there, this problem qualifies the optimism of work on the contact hypothesis, which holds that ethnic and racial relations will improve if only we can bring people together under favourable conditions. It highlights not only the practical obstacles that remain in path of social change, but also the need to account for psychological resistance by dominant groups to the implementation of desegregation policies … resistance expressed by individual to exercise their 'preferences' for particular residential areas, schools, colleges and so on (Goldberg, 1998). On one level, the answers to such questions may be sought in a set of generic psychological processes whose operation has been acknowledged by contact researchers. Even under relatively favourable circumstances, for example, contact may leave unaltered a resilient set of core stereotypes about others (Rothbart & John, 1985), provoke anxiety and discomfort (Stephan & Stephan, 1985), and intensify the desire to remain 'positively' and 'optimally' distinct (Brewer, 1997). There is some evidence that such factors are associated with the maintenance of a segregated society, shaping where and with whom we prefer to live (e.g. Farley et al., 1994; Bobo & Zubrinksy, 1996; Zubrinksy, 2000).

We have argued that resistance to segregation may also derive from its attributed impact on places and the identities they uphold. On a personal level, such attributions may invite the kind of defensive-avoidant reactions mentioned by Proshansky et al. (1983). After all, the more individuals construct others' presence as undermining the identity-affirming qualities of an environment, the more likely it becomes that they will adopt avoidance as a course of action. Equally, however, we need to investigate further the role of place identity constructions in sustaining wider ideologies of segregation and in warranting collective as well as individual patterns of re-segregation. Communal stories about the disruption of place, or the erosion of valued ways of being-in-place, are not merely ways of making sense of social change: they may also inform and justify collective resistance to social change. As Bonaiuto and Bonnes have observed (2000, p. 76), "… environmental discursive constructions are rhetorically oriented and serve the interests of people and groups which are part of a wider argumentative context which is intrinsically cultural, social, political and economical". Inevitably, such constructions have a heightened relevance in South Africa, a society where segregation was for so long the defining principle of social life and where its abolition has, quite literally, revolutionized citizens' sense of their place in the world. Discourse about the transformation of beaches from restorative spaces of the self to spaces of hyper vigilance and dislocation illustrate one representation of this process. In this light, our white respondents' accounts of changing relations on Scottburgh's beachfront can be interpreted as echoing and reworking a wider politics of belonging.

Part of that politics, of course, involves the positive and necessary project of constructing new spaces of integration in South Africa. In this context, it is worth reiterating that 'dislocation' is only one of several constructions of the social psychological implications of desegregation, a point illustrated by our brief consideration of the interview accounts of black visitors to Scottburgh's beachfront. Far from being a universal reaction, dislocation must be viewed as a highly political—and thus contestable—framework for understanding the consequences of change. Just as the dissolution of racial boundaries may form the basis for resistance to desegregation, so the project of warranting and implementing desegregation may be grounded in the possibility of creating more inclusive, unifying and liberating places.

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