

# **Sexual politics, space, and agency: discourses of gender non- conforming young people on the urban peripheries of Cape Town**

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love  
class  
agency race  
sexual politics  
Southern Suburbs  
gender non-conforming  
personal/political  
performance  
Cape Flats  
place

# On space & safety

Nadia: So around Rondebosch-East, Wetton, Lansdowne, where would you be able to go as an individual gay man or as a couple? Where you would be able to express yourself freely?

Zakaria: Everywhere

Bevan: There are places like...

Zakaria: Not outside the Mosque

Bevan: But like in Moslem Wembley

Zakaria: That's very true but that was never a joke, hey

Bevan: No, there are places that have strong....

Zakaria: Masculine and homophobic...

Bevan: And also religiously, if you go to Lansdowne for instance, where there's a Muslim population and in Islam it's not okay to be gay, it's harder, it's difficult to go to a place that has a strong religious environment, it's difficult to be comfortable. I didn't feel comfortable in holding his hand in front of all Muslims, thinking that a hate crime could happen, they could have ... done something to us, so I was reluctant to be his boyfriend.

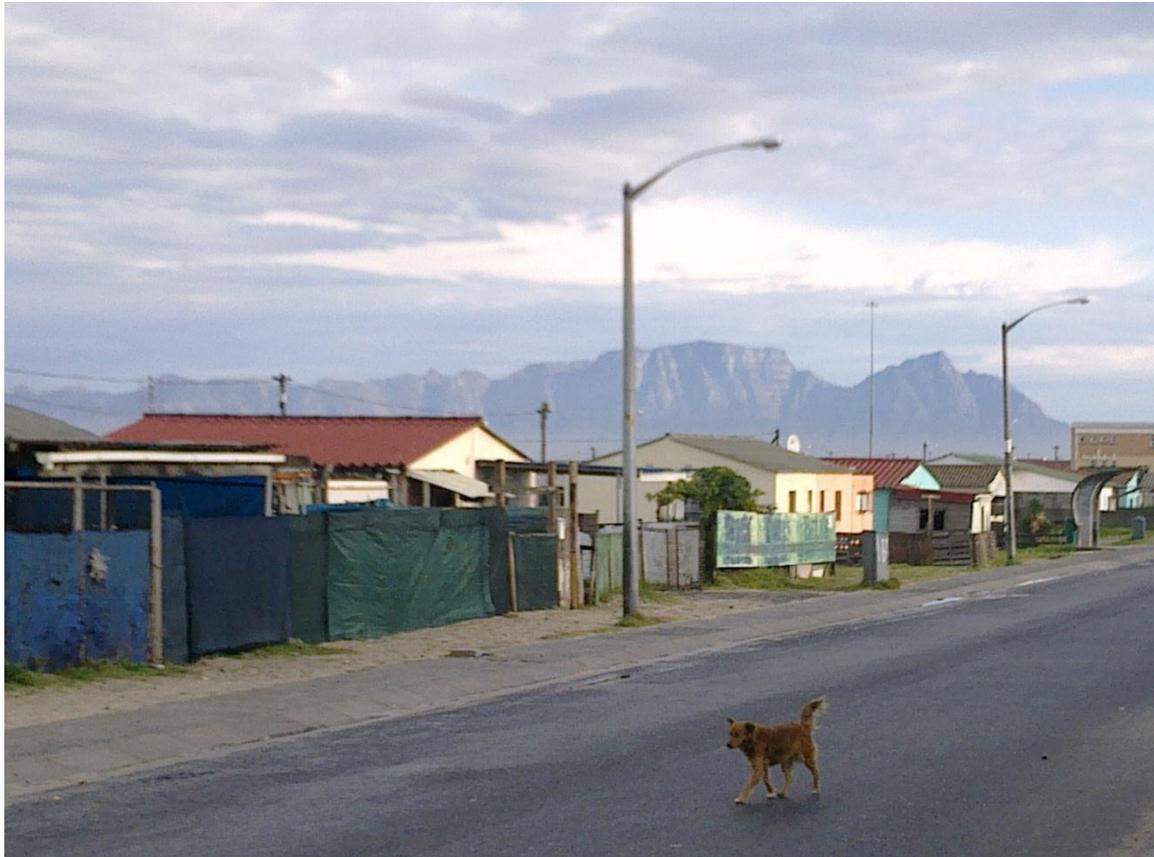


**Lansdowne, Southern Suburbs**  
Cape Town

# On class & independence

If I felt like I could not be financially independent with my parents, I couldn't be strong in my identity 'cause I was dependent on them. How can I assert my identity? My identity is now dependent on them because I'm dependent on their money (Zakaria, 24-year old gay man, Rondebosch-East).

I can't be the person that I really wanna be because I don't have a job and I don't have a stable place. That is keeping me back in my life (Coco, 23-year old transgendered woman, Mitchell's Plain).



**Tafelsig, Mitchell's Plain**  
Cape Town

# Space, sexuality, & race

All of the clubs within the CBD to me are predominantly white, with the exclusion of *Rosies* which is situated a block from other clubs, so race definitely plays a role. There's interplay between the type of clubs and the race [of people] who frequent them (Selwyn, 23-year old gay male, Bellville-South).

# Difference, excess, & intersections

Our rights are violated much more. In terms of the remarks, in terms of the rape, the abuse, physical abuse, the way they categorise us, in terms of fighting against this. I would say socially I don't think there's much more we can do. We can try and form more groups but I think forming more [groups] just shows other people or straight people that *we are groups*, we're different. That is wrong - that's why I enjoy being part or supporting any group, whether we're standing for feeding the cats on campus, support just to show that there is no difference. There are no differences between me and the next person, especially when it comes to sexual preference (Sarah, 22-year old lesbian, Bellville-South).

# On agency and resistance

At the end of the day, I was thinking this is something that's not negotiable and I needed to set boundaries around myself to say you either accept this - not everything, they don't need to completely accept it - but they just need to keep quiet about it (Zakaria, 24-year old gay male, Rondebosch-East).