

**‘For Farmers, by Farmers’: Using *The Farmer* Magazine to Write the
History of White Farmers in Zimbabwe, 1980-2002**

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Abstract: This paper explores the benefits of using in-house periodicals to writing the history of interest groups and unions in southern Africa. In particular it focuses on using *The Farmer* magazine as a source to write more nuanced social and cultural histories of white farmers in Zimbabwe. The importance of *The Farmer* to the white farming community is laid out and it is argued that long-term and detailed readings of this magazine offer the opportunity to explore the evolutions in discourse within the farming community, the processes of transition and the ambiguities of independence for a group like the white farmers. The uses described are ones that have rarely been put into practice in southern Africa, but are also ones that can be easily transposed to other settings and context.

Key Words: Zimbabwe, *The Farmer*, white farmers, Commercial Farmers’ Union, media history, Africa.

Introduction

Since the turn of the millennium the white farming population of Zimbabwe has found itself one of the principal targets of President Robert Mugabe’s desperate and violent bid to hold onto power. The controversial government sanctioned occupations of white owned land, led by veterans of the country’s liberation war, have resulted in the near obliteration of the community and seen white farming numbers dropping from nearly 5,000 to under 200. As a

consequence of these events, white farmers have found themselves at the heart of a new era of research into their history and experiences. The archives of the Commercial Farmers' Union of Zimbabwe (CFU) and various forms of oral history have been the primary sources underpinning this new research (Selby; McDermott Hughes). This paper puts forward that there is another source for writing the history and experiences of white farmers in Zimbabwe that has been vastly underutilised: *The Farmer* magazine. This weekly publication, which was produced through the CFU and was intended to cater for the whole farming community, has been a part of the farming Union since the 1940s. Before its closure in 2002, *The Farmer* was the most influential and widely circulated agricultural periodical in the country and a close reading of it from 1980 to 2002 reveals remarkable insights into how the farming community engaged with the post-colonial state, as well as the intricate and complicated evolutions in discourse, arguments of belonging and how political, economic and social changes over this period were understood.

Relatively small-scale magazines like *The Farmer*, which may be termed in-house publications, are able to tell us so much about the about the aspirations, fears, engagement and understandings of the groups they write for and speak to that is not present, or much harder to find, in larger publications, such as daily newspapers or national magazines. *The Farmer* provides insights into the organisation of white farmers and allows one to track the ebb and flow of issues affecting this group. This applies to day-to-day issues of farm management, such as drought, labour, commodity pricing and the like, as much as it does to fundamental shifts in their realities, such as the coming of independence (1980) or the land reforms post-2000.

As Jocelyn Alexander commented, after independence the ‘spaces and the occupants of white farms fell outside the remit of nationalist historiography’ (“Historiography” 189). While this applied to white farmers as much as farm workers and rural peasantry, the process of writing about white populations in Zimbabwe was a problematic and controversial undertaking. Only recently have regional and international changes in the approaches to whose and what history can be written allowed numerous academics to undertake investigations into white histories in post-colonial Africa.

The Emergence of White Histories in African Studies

At the end of the 1990s, Ann Stoler and Frederick Cooper urged researchers to ‘take apart the shifts and tensions within colonial projects with the same precision devoted to analysing the actions of those who were made their objects’ (20). Numerous recent works have taken up this challenge with concerns to the South African and Rhodesian settler state (Roos; Giliomee; Cohen). Furthermore, the survival of various white and ex-colonial populations across the continent has led a new generation of researchers to investigate how these white communities have continued to exist in the post-colonial era. ‘Whiteness’ studies are fast becoming popular areas of research within southern Africa (Steyn; López). Unsurprisingly, whiteness has also been a motivating research topic for several academic studies concerning Zimbabwe. McDermott Hughes’ *Whiteness in Zimbabwe* is the most prominent of these (also see K. Alexander; Selby), which has built on earlier studies of the settler population in Rhodesia (Caute; Godwin and Hancock; Kennedy; Phimister *Economic and Social*).

The dramatic events in Zimbabwe since 2000, and the direct targeting of rural white populations, have served to create regional and international audiences for works devoted to white experiences in Zimbabwe, and those of white farmers in particular. A number of white

farmers have written and published their own autobiographical assessments since 2000 (Buckle *African*; Buckle *Beyond*, Harrison, Beattie, Barker, Wiles) and their traumatic experiences have also been narrated in a number of rather simplistic journalistic accounts (Hill; Meredith; Norman; Meldrum; Lamb). Much more vigorous and nuanced academic work has also started to emerge, much of it produced by a new generations of researchers (Raby; Selby; Suzuki). This work builds upon a rich scholarship of land and its control in Zimbabwe (for overviews of this literature see Palmer “Land Reform”, J. Alexander “Historiography”, Pilosof “Land Question”), and earlier scholarship into the history of white farmers in Rhodesia (Hodder-Williams; McKenzie). None of this work, however, has used *The Farmer* as a source in the way proposed by this paper.

The History and Relevance of The Farmer

The precise genealogy of *The Farmer* difficult to ascertain, but, what is clear is that in 1943, the then Rhodesian National Farmers’ Union (the CFU’s predecessor) adopted a publication titled *Vuka* as the official journal of the Union. *Vuka* then changed to *The Rhodesian Farmer* in 1946, before becoming *The Farmer* in 1979. *The Farmer* was a weekly publication focusing on issues of technical and expert advice. However, due to a lack of expertise the magazine often faced a shortfall of such material. To offset these shortcomings *The Farmer* found other ways to fill its pages. With a wide range of very real and pressing concerns affecting the white farming community pre- and post-independence, this was not hard to do. Issues such as land reform, drought management, labour relations and rights, security and safety concerns all featured heavily in the magazine.

The Farmer was not the only agricultural periodical in Zimbabwe. There were other periodicals dedicated to particular industries, such as *Cattle World* and *Tobacco News*. The

magazine of South Africa's white farming union, Agri SA, the *Farmer's Weekly* was also very popular in Zimbabwe. While these publications attracted specific audiences, various aspects of *The Farmer* set it apart from these other magazines. Firstly, it sought to speak to the entire farming community rather than various sectors. In addition, *The Farmer* had a high level of distribution and readership within the farming community. At independence every registered commercial farmer received a copy of the magazine free as part of their subscription fees to the Union. Since every commercial farmer had to be a member of the CFU by law (Bratton 14; McKenzie 10), this ensured that the magazine was readily available to the vast majority of its target demographic. Besides its remarkable distribution, it is clear that the magazine was actively read and consumed by large numbers of white commercial farmers. In 1995, a survey carried out by a CFU restructuring committee found that of a sample of just over 1,000 farmers (nearly a quarter of the white farming population), 96% reported that they read *The Farmer* regularly. (i)

Secondly, and probably more importantly, *The Farmer* was published by the CFU. From 1943 to 1982, the magazine was clearly linked to the Union in an official capacity, as indicated by the taglines on the front page which always referred to the magazine as 'the Official Journal' of the RNFU or CFU. However, after independence, this situation changed. The CFU, conscious of the new political dynamics, sought to create some distance between itself and the publication. In 1982 the CFU established the Modern Farming Publications Trust (MFP Trust) to run the magazine and dropped the 'Official Journal' tagline in order, at least on the face of it, to create some separation between the two entities but the CFU still maintained a great deal of editorial control.

Opportunities Offered by The Farmer

The study of the publication and production of media such as *The Farmer* has received very little attention in Africa. Media and journalism studies on and of the continent have largely concerned themselves with the role of independent versus state controlled media and the processes of democratisation (Hyden, Leslie and Ogundimu; Nyamnjoh; Njogu and Middleton; Tetty). The majority of media research in Zimbabwe has conformed to this pattern with the key issue being how various publications have interacted with the political context (Nyarota; Chuma; Melber; Zaffiro; Frederikse; Windrich). However, while *The Farmer* does speak to some of these concerns, it largely fulfils a very different function as a medium of print in an independent African nation. *The Farmer's* primary focus was informing and speaking for the white farming community and, as a result, it had little interest in reporting on wider events that had no bearing on the community. Indeed, its constitution dictated that it was “apolitical” and it had no aims in promoting a “democratic” society. The qualities of *The Farmer* mentioned above (wide and established readership, and proximity to the CFU) place *The Farmer* in a different category of publication to the other agricultural periodicals mentioned. As such, it enables those seeking to write more nuanced and comprehensive social and cultural accounts of white farmers in Zimbabwe to use *The Farmer* to explore the mindset of the CFU and how it interacted with current politics and its constituency. Full documentation of these opportunities is beyond the remit of this paper, but there is one key post-independence example that highlights the potential of *The Farmer*. This lies in comparing the way the magazine represented violence against white farmers during two key events after 1980: Gukurahundi and the land reform programme after 2000. (ii)

The Representation of Violence After Independence.

In November 2000, David Tyndale-Biscoe had a letter published in *The Farmer* magazine, in which he rallied against Mugabe's misrule of the country. He concluded his letter by warning:

As President, [Robert Mugabe] can also keep the curtain down on the genocide wrought on the civilian population by his 5th brigade in the early 1980s ... What is unsettling for us southern Africans and potential foreign investors is that our SADC leaders seem mesmerized by Mugabe's artful talk. When you sup with the devil, please be sure to use a long spoon. (iii)

This letter fails to acknowledge the farming community's own complicated relationship with Mugabe and his party, the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), and that they may be susceptible to the same accusations of 'supping with the devil'. This is illustrated by looking at how the CFU and *The Farmer* reported on the events of Gukurahundi during the 1980s, and comparing this to how they then used the implication of that violence to call for their own protection after 2000.

As has been well documented, during the colonial era, and particularly during the rule of Ian Smith and the UDI years (Unilateral Declaration of Independence), white farmers benefited from a wide range of privileges designed to keep them on the land (Phimister "Combined", Cauter, Palmer *Land and Racial*, Riddell, Moyana, Clark, Alexander *Unsettled*). The racially biased land policies severely limited black access to quality agricultural land in the first instance, and then ensured that the black peasantry's access to markets was acutely restricted (Keyter). During UDI and the liberation war these measures became even more unbalanced, with massive subsidies supplied to white farmers to keep them on the land to act as a buffer to the guerrilla armies (Phimister "Combined" 5, Riddell 13).

With Mugabe's election victory in 1979, the white farming community feared the end of their privileged lifestyles. Although the commercial farmers had secured a great deal of protection during the Lancaster House negotiations, such as the willing-buyer, willing-seller method of land reform, there was a very real concern that Mugabe and his party would not abide by those agreements (Moyo). This fear was palpable in *The Farmer*. In the first editorial of 1980 the editor, Bernard Miller, cautioned:

More than paper promises are required if there is to be a renewal of confidence of those whose skills and expertise are vital components to the welfare, prosperity and development of this land. / And foremost among these with the know-how are farmers ... who stand to lose most through the implementation of foolish political doctrine which is directly responsible for so much chaos in the Third World. / To now lose the confidence of agriculture - and in agriculture - can only spell national disaster. (iv)

However, immediately after independence, Mugabe went to great lengths to assure the white community at large, and white farmers in particular, of their continued future in Zimbabwe (Raftopoulos x). Mugabe himself addressed the CFU's first annual congress after independence and further endeared himself to the farming community:

I ... believe that you, the farmers, hold the future of our nation in your hands. I close [this speech] with the assurance that Government will do all in its power to assist you in the task of building a great Zimbabwe. (v)

Despite these assurances, many white farmers did vacate their land and left the country. However, many stayed on, encouraged by Mugabe's reconciliatory tone. As a result, there

was a remarkable transformation of Mugabe and ZANU-PF's image in *The Farmer*. With the contest for political control over, the CFU aligned themselves with the victors. This is hardly surprising considering the perilous nature of the white farmers' position, but what is remarkable is how far this support for the new government dictated coverage of events in *The Farmer*.

The reconciliation extended to the whites after independence was not extended to Mugabe's main political rival, Joshua Nkomo and his party the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU). Long standing tensions between the two men and parties continued to ferment after independence and there were several skirmishes between their respective armed forces (Muzondidya 178-9). As political and regional distrust intensified many parts of Matabeleland witnessed significant civil unrest. Finally, in 1983, under the pretext that disturbances in Matabeleland was being caused by ZAPU forces, Mugabe deployed the newly trained Fifth Brigade and other military units to quell the unrest and unleashed a wave of violence that, from 1983 to 1986, claimed an estimated 20,000 lives, while 'hundreds of thousands of others were tortured, assaulted or raped or had their property destroyed' (Phimister "Making and Meaning" 199).

ZANU-PF propaganda maintained that there were large numbers of 'dissident' and 'rebel' forces destabilising the country and who posed a threat to the fledgling democracy's sovereignty and integrity (Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe [CCJPZ] 40-5). It is now widely accepted that such language and framing had more to do with the political expediency of legitimating the scale of intrusion into the region than the threat actually posed. The state run *Herald* newspaper frequently claimed that the rebels numbered up to 5,000, while the official government line was that there were around 1,000 dissidents in

the country. Alexander has revealed that the dissidents probably never numbered more than 400 at any one time (J. Alexander “Dissident” 166).

Nevertheless, white farmers were often direct victims of dissident activity. By 1987, more than 50 white farmers and their families had been killed by dissidents (Selby 170). Unsurprisingly, the unrest that directly affected the white farming communities in Matabeleland and Midlands received a great deal of attention in *The Farmer*. As during the liberation war, issues of security and stability were never far from the magazine’s scrutiny. However, there was a new tension to this coverage. Unlike during the liberation war, where only one farming death was reported in the magazine, after 1980 every single farmer killed due by dissidents and the like was given coverage. (vi) In addition, during the 1970s it had described all ZANU and ZAPU guerrilla activity as “terrorist”. Now, with a Mugabe, a former “terrorist”, in power, *The Farmer* had to find more nuanced ways of describing and reporting on events of rural violence. *The Farmer* circumvented this problem by adopting the terms the government used for describing the unrest in Matabeleland. During the 1980s *The Farmer* put the violence in Matabeleland and the Midlands down to ‘cowardly dissidents and bandits’. (vii) ZANU-PF’s hostility to the dissident forces was such that *The Farmer* could use it to foster a greater partnership between farmers and government, and support their own calls for protection by the new regime.

In May 1982, Brain Dawe, a farmer in Chinoyi was gunned down by ‘3 AK-waving “dissidents”’. (viii) *The Farmer* published Mugabe’s reaction to the killing: ‘I can assure you [the dissidents] cannot escape the hand of justice. In due course we are going to rid this region of these elements which are committed to banditry’. (ix) *The Farmer* repeated these positive assurances and portrayed the government as wholly motivated to quell the dissident

threat. The vast majority of articles on the violence and killings in the region were accompanied by messages of support and acclaim for what *The Farmer* viewed as the government's evident commitment to resolving the security concerns in the region and restoring law and order. In an in-depth examination into the region in 1983, *The Farmer* commented:

The police and 5 Brigade members that we saw were turned out in clean kit, looked fit and were well armed. However ... the security forces are often handicapped by a reluctance of victims or witnesses to report the incidents ... Government's heavy military commitment to the area leaves no doubt as to its intention to restore law and order. (x)

The security forces were lauded for their efforts in eradicating the dissident threat. For example, when the notorious bandit Gwesela was killed by security forces in 1987, it was heralded as a great achievement:

The news that Gwesela ... has at last been killed has come as a great relief to many people, not least the people whom he and his gang have terrorised over the last few years. Farmers, farm workers, officials, tribesmen have all been victims of his ruthless and inhuman acts. / It is good that ordinary people realise that there is nobody who is above the law and that criminals will be dealt with. (xi)

Occurrences such as this were reported with obvious relish, bringing with them a palpable sense of relief to the farming communities. After the death of Gwesela the CFU branch chairman for the Midlands, Mr Klaas Folkersten stated, 'I think the farmers should congratulate the security forces – there is generally a feeling of relief in the area'. (xii)

On the few occasions when *The Farmer* did articulate concerns about government actions in Matabeleland, these primarily expressed dissatisfaction that the government was not doing enough to quell the dissident threat. At the Cattle Congress of 1983, *The Farmer* reported that, ‘in a heated debate on security, law and order ... Government was accused of “covering up” the true situation’. (xiii) The ‘cover-up’ alluded to was that the situation was worse than was being reported. Tellingly, the same report revealed the extent of white farmers’ awareness of government and Fifth Brigade activity in the region:

Mr Joubert [a farmer in the Bubue District] alleged that instead of hunting dissident gangs, troops are avoiding them. He claims that on several occasions, dissidents had ambushed Army personnel. Army units, said Mr Joubert would not attack gangs of more than 15 dissidents and often avoided contact with smaller groups. / Mr Joubert angrily criticised the lack of response by Army and Police to reported sightings and alleged Army and Police units on the ground lacked the will and motivation to counteract dissident activity. (xiv)

Many other reports followed a similar pattern outline above, criticizing only the scale and efficiency of government actions. Despite the coverage of dissident activity and other security concerns in *The Farmer*, there was absolutely no mention of the mass violence carried out by the Fifth Brigade against the people of Matabeleland. Having survived the coming of majority rule, it is clear that the CFU wished to preserve its cosy relationship with the new government. Offering criticism of its approach in Matabeleland would have put that partnership in jeopardy, so the CFU muzzled *The Farmer* and forced it to carry the CFU and party line (Pilosof, “Remaining Apolitical”). No where was this more evident than with the magazines coverage of the Unity Accord signed between a defeated ZAPU and a ZANU-PF

gloating on securing a one party state. *The Farmer* praised the government's handling of the cease-fire and its 'magnanimous' decision to form the Unity government. It claimed the unity accord 'dealt a body-blow to those external forces bent on destabilisation through party dissention'. (xv) *The Farmer* emphasized the need for all to 'grasp the hand of reconciliation' and commented that the 'Government has demonstrated both in word and deed that it wishes to include all Zimbabweans at all levels and values the contribution made by men of goodwill'. (xvi)

With the violence of Gukurahundi over and their relationship with government intact, white farmers began to feel much more secure about their position in Zimbabwe. This confidence showed in *The Farmer* as, slowly, after total support, criticisms of the government's management of issues such as land reform began to emerge. With the expiration of the Lancaster House constitution in 1990 and the introduction of compulsory land acquisition measures in 1992, the CFU began to advocate the legitimacy of the white farmers land holdings and position much more urgently. As the 1990s progressed the relationship between the commercial farmers and the government began to strain as ZANU-PF sought to counter its waning popularity with an increasingly expansive land reform programme. Things came to a head with the constitutional referendum of February 2000. The government endorsed draft constitution included a clause that claimed it was Britain's responsibility to compensate white farmers for land acquired by the state. Concerned by such developments, the farming community put a great deal of effort in securing a 'No' vote. According to Selby, 'while the NCA [National Constitutional Assembly] mobilised effectively in urban areas, farmers began to mobilise through local exercises, by urging farm-workers to reject the constitution, and by printing t-shirts and leaflets calling for a "NO" vote' (Selby 277).

The 'No' vote was successful and ZANU-PF suffered their first electoral defeat. It also led to the establishment of a popular and viable opposition movement, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), which threatened ZANU-PF's hold on power. Initially Mugabe promised to respect the wishes of the people and uphold the results of the referendum. However, almost immediately after the referendum results were confirmed, invasions of white owned land began across the country accompanied by a massive crackdown on urban and rural supporters of the MDC. Events on the land since 2000 have been well documented elsewhere, and will not be repeated here (see Selby, J. Alexander *Unsettled*). Rather how the violence against white farmers after 2000 were covered in *The Farmer* will remain the focus.

From this point, the farm occupations, and the violence accompanying them, became staple content of *The Farmer*. From the start images and memories of the liberation war were evoked in the magazine, despite the intervening two decades. In addition, the scale and nature of the farm 'invasions' raised fears of ethnic cleansing and genocide within the farming community, who, in their paranoia, frequently compared themselves to Jews during World War Two. (xvii) It was not long before *The Farmer* began to use the horrors of Gukurahundi to advocate for their own protection. In April 2000, Martin Olds was murdered on his farm. *The Farmer* reported: 'Illegal land invasions by Zimbabwe's so called war veterans began slowly in Matabeleland, but last week's brutal and cowardly slaying of Nyamandhlovu farmer Martin Olds created tension not seen since the Five Brigade massacres in the 80s'. (xviii) A month later Allan Dunn was killed, and the magazine claimed, 'It was a political murder and we must assume it was sanctioned, as we must assume the other murders ... [and] assaults have been sanctioned. / Zimbabwe cannot afford ... another infamous Gukurahundi massacre of the innocents on its hands [sic]'. (xix)

The process of the land occupations and the violence suffered by the white farmers (even though this paled in comparison to the traumas experienced by commercial farm workers) made it possible for the farming community to manufacture connections and shared injustices. This is reflected in letters published by *The Farmer*. In August 2000, Diana Charsley had a letter published which quoted a from the testimony of a pregnant woman who was hit in the stomach by a Fifth Brigade soldier:

The unborn child broke into pieces in my stomach. The baby boy died inside.

/ It was God's desire that I did not die too. The child was born afterwards, piece by piece. A head alone, then a leg, an arm, the body-piece by piece.

(xx)

Charsley's believed that 'the man who sanctioned incidents like the one ... is the same one who is responsible for the current suffering'. With no other contextualisation, it is clear that Charsley is creating a direct link between the sufferings of white farmers after 2000 and the Ndebele during 1980s. Later in 2000, as mentioned, Tyndale-Biscoe also commented upon the horrors of Gukurahundi in a letter. However, the ironic prophecy of his conclusion was probably lost on him.

Unsurprisingly, the magazine never attempted any reflective review of its own position during the state-sponsored violence of Gukurahundi. There was never any recognition of the contradiction between the magazine's earlier denial to comment on the government's suppression of Matabeleland, and its attempt to use Gukurahundi as proof of ZANU-PF's track record of misrule and authoritarianism. The horrors of Gukurahundi, which the magazine had worked so hard to avoid attributing to government in the 1980, became a key tool with which to frame the violence after 2000. Unprepared to speak out when white

farmers were not the direct victims of ZANU-PF's violence, *The Farmer* now sought to illustrate a longer trajectory of government misrule which needed to be stopped, for the sake of the whole country, and not just their own immediate futures (Pilossof, *Unbearable*). The sudden association with a claimed fellow victimhood was entirely ahistorical and reveals the silences and forgetting central to white farmer discourse.

Conclusion

It is only through a close and extended reading of *The Farmer* that this evolution of the discourses is apparent and how certain 'regimes of truth' are moulded and constructed in the farming community (Dirks). Understanding these process reveals a great deal of the changing relationship between white farmers and the government during the post-colonial era. Besides the matter of violence and political allegiance there are numerous other avenues to explore in *The Farmer*, such as how the CFU engaged with other issues such as the question of land reform, race relations and economic policy (Pilossof, *Unbearable*). Such reading and research offers numerous insights into the functioning of interest group politics, as well as the survival techniques of the remnants of empire, which add significantly to the historiographies of post-colonial Zimbabwe and challenge many current popular assumptions about white farmers and the state. Such practices can be employed in other contexts to enrich the current literature on various interest groups, economic sectors and unionized entities and their interactions with the post-colonial state, all of which demand much more attention and research.

Stephen Ellis has put forward that newspapers and periodicals, can possibly be some of the best sources for writing contemporary African history. However, he warns of the practical problem of accessing substantial collections of these publications. Furthermore, Ellis is sceptical of the 'reliability' of these records and the ability of historians to use them as a source. He laments that historians have shown themselves to be:

rather unskilled in their handling of the press as a source of political history, being rightly sceptical about whether it is legitimate to regard newspapers and magazines as reliable records and often therefore considering them largely as supplements to a staple diet of official archives (Ellis 16).

What I have tried to argue in this paper is it is time to move away from these dismissive approaches to media as a source and begin to use it in much more dynamic ways. Magazines such as *The Farmer* can be used as more than just an accurate record, and instead offer ways to locate how various entities engaged with political, economic and social processes underway. By doing so one is able to track and monitor the changes and evolutions in discourse, beliefs and attitudes of over time.

The white or commercial agricultural unions of other ex-settler colonies in Africa, such as South Africa, have similar publications that would make comparative projects possible. However, this type of research need not be limited to white or settler populations. Various other interest groups, organisations and unions across southern Africa and further afield have produced similar in-house publications. For example, within southern Africa the vast majority of the liberation movements had their own publications, such as *The Zimbabwe Review* (produced by the ZAPU) and *The Zimbabwe News* (ZANU) from Zimbabwe. Publications of a similar vein from across the region offer the chance of other comparative work to be undertaken. Furthermore many of these publications are being digitised and put online through the *Aluka* Project (Isaacman, Lalu and Nygren). Such developments offer exciting research opportunities for those seeking to investigate the contemporary history of Africa and the social and cultural history of particular groups and entities that been part of the dramatic events on the continent over the past century.

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Notes

- i. "Everyone Reads *The Farmer*." *The Farmer* 24 Aug. 1995: 22 and 26.
- ii. The coverage *The Farmer* gave Gukurahundi and the land reforms after 2000 presented in this paper are explored in much greater detail in my book, *The Unbearable Whiteness of Being: Farmers' Voices From Zimbabwe* (Harare and Cape Town: Weaver and UCT Press, 2012). Plus, other issues such as land reform, farm profitability, labour management and farm workers health are also discussed in detail. Chapters three and four of the book show how the many issues affecting the farming community are presented in *The Farmer* and how the shifting discourses reveal the anxieties and beliefs of the white farming population in Zimbabwe.
- iii. "Power so Intoxicating [letter]." *The Farmer* 14 Nov. 2000: 3.
- iv. "Vuka Viewpoint: Traumatic Year." *The Farmer* 4 Jan. 1980: 3.
- v. "We Need You, Says Mugabe." *The Farmer* 11 Aug. 1980: 19.
- vi. For a fuller discussion of reports of farming deaths in *The Farmer* after 1980 (and a full list of all deaths reported, with dates, victims and location), and reasons why deaths were not reported in the 1970s, see chapter four in my book, *The Unbearable Whiteness of Being*.
- vii. "Farmers' Morale Low." *The Farmer* 16 July. 1984: 7.
- viii. "Farm Murder Worries Union." *The Farmer* 10 May. 1982: 9.
- ix. "Farm Murder Worries Union." *The Farmer* 10 May. 1982: 9.
- x. "Our Farmers Aid Farmers in Times of Trial." *The Farmer* 25 Apr. 1983: 5:

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- xi. "Welcome End of a Ruthless Menace." *The Farmer* 26 Nov. 1987: 1.
- xii. "Killer Dissident is Dead." *The Farmer* 26 Nov. 1987: p. 3.
- xiii. "Farmers Hit at Security 'Cover-up'." *The Farmer* 20 June. 1983: 3.
- xiv. "Farmers Hit at Security 'Cover-up'." *The Farmer* 20 June. 1983: 3.
- xv. "Bonds of Unity Strengthened." *The Farmer* 7 Jan. 1988: 1.
- xvi. "Grasping the Hand of Reconciliation." *The Farmer* 11 Feb. 1988: 1.
- xvii. "Bottom Line." *The Farmer* 27 Apr. 2000: 41.
- xviii. "Matabeleland Murder Leaves Questions About Police." *The Farmer*. 27 Apr. 2000: 5.
- xix. "Murder They Planned." *The Farmer* 11 May. 2000: 1.
- xx. "It Happened in the 80's [letter]." *The Farmer* 15 Aug. 2000: 4.

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