

# **The *South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* as a subtle agent of change for British South African women's view of race relations in southern Africa**

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## **Abstract**

This article seeks to explore how the reading matter in a monthly magazine may have influenced its readers' views of race relations during the first half of the 20th century. The *South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* (1910–1940) claimed to be the first leading woman's magazine to circulate throughout the four provinces of the Union of South Africa. It also had readers in the major centres of Rhodesia, South West Africa, Mozambique and the Congo. Its target market was white, English speaking-women who, at the time, formed a community of readers with still strong ties to 'home' and, as the years went by, were attempting to work out what it meant to be South African. The magazine reflects and may have influenced its readers' changing views on their position as English South Africans in relation to the other races, both in this country and globally, through informative articles, reader correspondence, short stories and book reviews.

**Keywords:** English South Africans, gender, race, women's magazines

## **Introduction**

Yet this is a danger which affects women and children most nearly, and is one in which the aid of women is needed even more than that of men (McPherson 1911: 29).

During the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, one would expect an English-speaking woman to have talked about 'danger' as the social ills of alcohol abuse, disease among the poor or infant mortality. But in the newly formed Union of South Africa the danger mentioned in the quote above referred to the ills that were expected to follow if the social boundaries between black and white were not 'correctly' policed. This view on the role of white women with regard to black men and women appeared in an article entitled the 'The black peril' which appeared in the *South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal*, a monthly women's magazine published between 1910 and 1940 in southern Africa. The magazine's target market was white, English-speaking South African women from the upper-middle class. While the quote refers to the action white women were to take in order to eradicate the perceived scourge of the black peril<sup>1</sup> specifically, it is consistent with the majority of the articles in the magazine, in that it advocates women's responsibility to play an active role in forming the 'correct' relations between the races in South Africa.

Currently very little is known about the *South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* besides what was claimed in its pages. A reason for this is that little credence was given to women's magazines at the time. Therefore, records of it were not kept for prosperity by anyone but the publisher, and the Central News Agency, which published the magazine, has as yet not made its archives available. Because so little value was attached to women's magazines, few copies of the magazine itself remain. Yet, even without clear records, the information from the pages of the magazine gives us an overview of its history. In 1909 the 'first popular magazine run in the interests of women' in South Africa was *The Lady's Home Journal*, started by Mr. C. Stokes under the

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editorship of Mrs. Katherine Kemp. While editing this magazine, Mrs. Kemp was invited to collaborate with Mr. Holderness Gale in forming and starting a new magazine, the *South African Lady's Pictorial*. In 1910 *The Lady's Home Journal* amalgamated with the *Lady's Pictorial Journal* to form the descriptively named *South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* (September 1927: 5). In 1916, Mrs. Kemp was appointed editor in full charge – a position she held until her retirement on 31 August 1927 (ibid.). The magazine rapidly grew to form a large sphere of influence. In 1915 it laid claim to the title of the only South African monthly magazine with a national scope, and a readership stretching from the Cape to the Congo and from South West Africa to Delagoa Bay. Without records there are no definite subscription numbers available to corroborate this claim, however, that the magazine was widely read was clearly not an empty assertion, as is clear from correspondence from all the major centres of South Africa, with strong, regular contributions from the then Rhodesia and South West Africa. There were also reader contributions such as pictures of recently engaged couples and readers' children from all over the country, submitted to the magazine to such an extent that the editor often had to request readers to be patient – they would publish their pictures in due course.

The magazine's target readership was white, English-speaking South Africans – a group that had been marginalised by historians until fairly recently, but who constituted the political and economic elite in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the magazine was published (Dubow 2006: 11–12; Lambert 2009: 599; Marks and Trapido 1987: 2).<sup>2</sup> For the most part, studies hitherto done on white, English-speaking South Africans have tended to focus either on periodicals not specifically aimed at women, or on novels. With the focus on a magazine tailored for women it becomes possible to gain insight into women's views of their own position in South Africa at a time when gender and racial roles were in flux.<sup>3</sup> When looking for studies on gender and racial views of English South Africans of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, English literature studies especially focus on racial and gender roles as portrayed in novels by South African authors or set in South Africa (see, e.g., Chennels 2004; Donovan 2007). The limitations of novels, which magazines seem able to overcome, is that they do not reflect how racial and gender views change over time. Books provide snapshots of specific gender and racial views held at their publication, thus reflecting the context in which they were written and published, rather than the times pre or post-publication that shaped the text. By contrast, a linear reading of a magazine published over a decade reveals it to be a textual chameleon. Its content changes monthly, and, moreover, its focus and value sets change over time as well. The meaning a reader garners from a book is determined by his/her socio-historical situation relative to that of the text when it was first written. A magazine more closely adapts to and expresses changes in the socio-historical situation of the reader. This study seeks to situate any novels referred to within the changing debate of the time by identifying when they were mentioned in the magazine – notably in the monthly review pages. This holds the benefit of narrowing the novels' context to show at which point in time they were significant in the racial and gender debate.

Besides the fact that it changed with the times, the *South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* holds special interest as a woman's magazine focused on providing reading material on topics of specific concern to women in South Africa. Topics included fashion, cookery, childcare, work deemed suitable for women, women's education, topical literature and social work. The topics were aimed at shaping the lives of Anglicized women belonging to the middle and upper classes in South Africa. Margaret Beetham (1996: 1) notes that women's magazines aimed to help their readers become the women they aspired to be, by providing advice on fashion, cooking and social conduct. If viewed as a genre of literature to be analysed, women's magazines can reveal much about how women viewed themselves and what they saw as the feminine ideal during a specific historical period. In a colony like South Africa, this has the added element of reflecting women's views on their position in relation to other races in the country. The magazine not only reflects the racial views

which readers held, but could also have influenced those views as the ‘magazine as “text” interacts with the culture which produced it and which it produces’ (ibid: 5). Through a close analysis of the content of the magazine, it is possible to deduce which racial views were acceptable enough to be published and debated in articles, and how these changed over the years. The polyphonic nature of the magazine (multiple authorship and reader contributions) means that the different and often opposing views held by its target group (white, English-speaking women) are shown. What is also clear is the absence of certain racial views, which indicates that some ideas were simply not allowed or considered topical for the magazine. This indicates what the editor believed readers wanted to read, and is indicative of at least a perceived consensus amongst the group. John Lambert (2009: 602–603) notes that it is impossible to impose a specific and uncontested character on the white, English-speaking readership due to individual and regional differences, yet broad generalisations can be made with regard to their language, shared Protestantism and exposure to canonical English literature. In the same sense, because the magazine was circulated throughout southern Africa (judging from readers’ correspondence), the racial views reflected in it are varied. As with the above mentioned characteristics identified by Lambert (2009), it is possible to trace certain broad trends in English South Africans’ changing racial views, which this article will interrogate for the years 1911-1917. The article will show how white, English-speaking readers perceived their position in relation to black men and women, women in Britain, and Afrikaners. Such racial views were greatly impacted by the then changing role of white women within society and in the home.

While magazines, like any literary texts, may influence readers’ views on race and gender, they cannot with any certainty determine how readers view different topics. All editors have to keep readers satisfied in order to maintain subscriptions, and in the *South African Lady’s Pictorial and Home Journal* this limited the information readers would have accepted. In addition, because the magazine under study had several writers and welcomed reader contributions, it is comparable to a conversation or even debate, revealing more than one side to readers’ opinions on race and gender. For the most part, what was debated were hot topics of the day, such as women’s rights and women’s rightful position in the home and workplace, education, the poor white problem and race. To grab the reader’s attention and even influence the debate the editor and/or writers could employ the text itself, headings, accompanying photographs, the placement of text in relation to other articles, and references to other literature.<sup>4</sup> It is perhaps for this reason that most writers used discussions on women’s roles as a way to introduce other topics such as race or class. Readers would understand from the headings or photographs that the article dealt with motherhood, for instance, and start reading it, only to be advised that it is a mother’s duty to keep her children from forming improper relations with other races. For this study, the interplay of text, headings, photographs, placement and intertextuality will be used to analyse opinions on race and gender that appear in the articles.

### **The colonial definition of race**

As a social concept, race was considered of interest and importance to women living in South Africa, although precisely what race meant is not as clear-cut as it is within a modern understanding. Krebs (1997: 428) notes that in South Africa at the time there were mixed views of race that were not based solely on physical appearance. Depending on the prevailing political argument, it is possible to discern race-as-ethnicity, race-as-nationality and race-as-colour. In his study on scientific racism in Victorian Britain, Douglas Lorimer (2009: 186) notes that race and culture were often confused and linked. Because skin colour did not form the sole determinant for race, at the time there were several white races as well as black races. The British viewed themselves (as did most other European cultures) as a distinctive race, i.e., Anglo Saxons or simply Saxons, that had common white, European or Teutonic origins, but they identified themselves as a separate race with particular physical and psychological characteristics. From the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, anthropologists wrote and presented findings that they felt allowed them to pinpoint inherent characteristics in particular races. While these characteristics differed slightly, they all agreed on the superiority of the white races: the majority of British anthropologists believed in the superiority of the Saxon race (Lorimer 1988, 2009). During the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, scientific studies, relying mostly on ideas of Social Darwinism and

anthropological studies of racial physiology and culture, were used to justify this hierarchical view. In pseudo-scientific language, the culture, habits, knowledge and appearance of different races were used to gauge their level of civilisation or the degree to which a culture had 'evolved'. Combined with this evolution-based understanding of civilisation was Spencer's idea of the survival of the fittest, which held recent European military victories as proof of the natural superiority of white races over conquered peoples (Dubow 2006; Lorimer 2009).

In the magazine, the different characteristics of the races that were stressed changed over time, although the vocabulary of race was never entirely dropped. During the first four years of the magazine's publication (1911–1914) there was an accepted hierarchy of races, ranging from most to least civilised, with the white races at the top. While it was accepted that there were clear differences between the white races – for example, all Irish were considered witty and full of good humour<sup>5</sup> – the magazine did not rank them. This practice changed during the First World War, when the Germans were repeatedly considered the most uncivilised white race after their invasion of Belgium. The event was repeatedly sensationalised in short stories and reports depicting German soldiers as rapists and child murderers (June 1916: 47; September 1916: 21; Alexander, November 1916: 17; Campbell, November 1917: 52–53). The Dutch, the other white race in South Africa that became known as the Afrikaners, were noticeably not portrayed in the magazine's articles, reviews or short stories as being on a lower level, probably because of a desire to unify the two white races after the Anglo-Boer War (Dubow 2006: 162; Keegan 2001: 460). Finally, Orientals, blacks and aboriginal races (the Khoi and San) were placed on successively lower tiers of the hierarchy<sup>6</sup>, with the lower orders being considered the least civilised. Keeping this hierarchy in mind, there appears different views on the position of other races in relation to the readership. Although these women were at the top of the 'racial' hierarchy, they were still subject to men, which complicated their view of the hierarchy (Bush 2000: 86; Keegan 2001: 461; Walker 1990: 1).

Being part of the dominant race in a British colony meant that race relations were important for women readers' perspectives on their own identity. As mothers, women were considered responsible for raising the new generation in a way that promoted the continuing progress – or, at least, not the regression – of their race. As women living in a British colony, their own position on the social scale, whether in relation to men in the colony or the women of the metropole, was also determined by race relations. As colonials, the women were colonisers in a country where another white race had recently been defeated in a war against Britain, and where all other races were seen as subject to the Crown. The women, still strongly identifying with Britain as 'home', sought to follow the customs and opinions of 'home'. They were therefore also 'colonised', being subordinate to not only men, but also the women from 'home' (Bush 2000: 86). The magazine was specifically suited to reflect and impact the changing view of race.

### **The position of blacks in relation to the magazine's readership**

It should be noted that compared to other social topics, few opinions on blacks appear in the magazine. For the most part, the role of blacks in the magazine articles and short stories appears to be simply to add to what can aptly be called the 'local colour'. For instance, reference to a band of natives singing 'their nonsense rhyme' (Maturin 1911: 37) helped the writer to create a 'truly' South African ambience, as much as mentioning the call of a fish eagle, heard while drinking tea. As a local colour was an important quality in any story by a South African writer, 'blacks', 'natives', 'servants' or 'kafirs' often appear in the stories, but without names or personalities. David Cornwell (1995: 1) argues that this as a typical characteristic of late 19<sup>th</sup>- and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century English South African novels, which 'either treats Africans and other people of colour as part of a scenic backdrop against which a human drama featuring white characters unfolds; or it speaks about them in an explicitly and systematically racist way'. Even in articles in the *South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* about mission stations, blacks were depersonalised.

## **Mission stations and the white (wo)man's burden**

Articles on mission stations appeared only in the first years of the magazine's publication, showing a few moments where the moribund idea of the Empire as a civilising force still appealed to a literary form dependent on topical fare.<sup>7</sup> Tellingly, there were only two articles on mission stations pre-World War I, but both were relatively lengthy (two to three pages), when compared to features on (white) girls' schools (half a page to a page, in general) with which they have much in common. Such a comparison is possible because descriptions of the mission stations and schools share a common format, focusing on the grounds, classrooms, education, outdoor activities and accompanying photographs. This may have played a role in terms of how readers interpreted the mission station articles – the articles on schools most likely impacted women readers' 'horizon of expectations', which would have made anything that differed from the standard school article, stand out (Jauss in Towheed, Crone and Halsey 2011: 71). The first article on a mission station was 'A visit to Mariannahill' (Dec 1911: 21–23), and the second 'A visit to Lovedale' (March 1913: 35, 37–38). Though both featured missionary efforts among black men and women, the focus was on the role of white women, rather than on black men or women.

For all its length, in the Mariannahill article the main focus remained firmly on the white men and women working in the mission schools, rather than on the black pupils. It appears that the writers and the editor believed readers would not be as interested in the stories of black students or teachers, but wanted to read about white men and women doing good works. Black students and teachers were not interviewed, nor were their personalities highlighted beyond them acting as a vehicle for whites to show themselves as the benevolent, Christianising force in Africa, there to pull the black man up the hierarchy of civilisation. Similarly, Lovedale is described as a place 'where white men and white women work to spread the Light amongst the native races – white men and white women, some delicately nurtured and mostly reared in cold northern climates, who have left home and kindred to teach, to civilise, and to Christianize' (March 1913: 38). The emphasis on the role of whites and the refusal to focus on black accomplishments or even acknowledge them as individuals were further enforced by the accompanying photographs. As a pictorial magazine, pictures would certainly have influenced any meaning derived from the text. What was photographed, along with the accompanying captions, gave readers an idea of what the editor or writer considered important information in the article, and what was there only to add 'local colour'. The mission station articles emulated most of the commonly featured articles on girls' schools, in which it was standard practice to feature photographs of white pupils without any names being provided. However, photographs of teachers usually featured the educators' names in the captions. In the Lovedale article, both students and black female teachers were left nameless. In a photograph with 14 teachers in it, noticeably, the seven white teachers are named, while the seven black teachers standing behind them are identified only as 'Native Pupil Teachers'. The picture clearly shows the focus of the article, making the white missionaries the subjects and the black pupils the objects: depersonalised, they are solely there to receive benevolent help from the whites. The 'depersonalisation' of blacks was a common feature not only in the magazine, but also in other literature of the time (Chennels 2004: 86; Cornwell 1995: 1).

The focus on whites aside, in the magazine the mission station articles 'call loudest' for blacks to be uplifted to the level of whites, although complete equality was seen as problematic, even in these comparatively liberal articles. 'A visit to Lovedale' was one of the few articles to support greater equality amongst the races and to touch on the need for 'a sympathy and an insight' between races in 'this great South African Union of ours, with its urgent problems of colour, race and language' (March 1913: 38). The latter sentiment was preceded by two pages supporting the idea that within the brotherhood of nations, blacks represent 'the younger brother' who needs to be uplifted by the 'older brother', i.e., whites. The articles on mission schools emphasise the white man's burden. Indeed, both articles support the notion of educating blacks – which, at face value, is similar to the magazine's emphasis on girls' schools and how women's education compares to that of males and boys. The writer of the Lovedale article emphasises the type of skills taught to black students, focusing on the careers of past students. This seems to indicate that white men and women were tasked with pulling black men and women up the ladder of civilisation by giving them an education comparable to that of white girls. This created an opportunity for equality, just as girls' schools had recently begun to

provide white girls with an education more comparable to that provided to white boys. However, as Homi Bhabha (in Chennels 2004: 73) notes, the colonisers were faced with a two-way problem: while they professed to want the colonised to act as they did, equality was not the aim as they feared losing the power status ascribed to their race. Chennels (ibid.) explains Bhabha's view on how the colonised mimicked Western modes of behaviour, in an 'ironic compromise':

The irony derives from colonialism's attempt to perpetuate two states both of which are desirable but both of which contradict one another. The colonized must be perpetually subordinate and yet at the same time imperialism justifies its activities by offering the colonized the chance to exchange savage stasis or oriental decadence ... for progress. On one level the colonizer demands that the colonized reproduces the higher way which colonialism has offered; on another level the colonized must always remain "a subject of difference that is almost the same but not quite.

In the same way, black students in the mission station articles are the same as white students ... but not quite. This becomes especially clear if one compares the articles on the mission stations with those on (white) girls' schools, to see why education on equal terms was not desired for mission schools. In many ways, the Lovedale article mimics those on white girls' schools, in that it explains the timetable and mentions the choir, the library, the cricket pitch and the football field. But then, instead of mentioning the sporting activities that follow classwork (as is usually the case in the white girls' schools), there is an explanation of woodwork, needlework and outdoor manual labour, which the writer stresses is aimed at correcting the 'mistaken idea prevailing amongst many that the native pupils at Lovedale are pampered and thus spoilt for after-life' (March 1913: 35). In the Mariannhill article there is also marked interest in the practical skills taught to black students and the type of work this prepares them for. Again, the emphasis is on the so-called useful work taught to natives, such as lace making, basket weaving and leatherwork. In addition, the photographs and text emphasise that blacks were trained for manual labour. While photographs of white girls' schools showed pupils in class or busy with sport, black students were shown in class or working in the fields, at needlework or being taught a practical skill. They were also described as 'contented-looking natives at work in the gardens and on the farms ...[that] spoke of ... the many-sided, world-wide British Empire, tolerant of every creed and caring for men and women of every race and colour' (Dec 1911: 21). Tolerance was promoted, not equality. As in Bhabha's argument, white workers at mission stations were there to allow blacks to mimic their colonisers, but only to prepare them for a type of work that would not place them in direct competition with whites. Although not overtly stated here, this point becomes clearer in other articles featured in the magazine just prior to and during the First World War. In the *South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* education was very important as it proved how women were continuously challenging the boundaries that a lack of or watered-down education had imposed on them. This gave them the means to attain a level of equality with men. Education for blacks was intended to do the opposite: instead of entrenching equality through education, as they had granted themselves, whites preferred to use education as a tool to keep blacks in service positions, thereby safeguarding their own position of power.

### **Competition between the modern woman and black workers**

The type of work for which a mission station education prepared blacks became more of a concern for the white female readership: if black men and women were capable of doing the same skilled jobs as white men and women, the job market (it was argued) would become saturated and this would lead to white unemployment. The argument greatly affected debates on the role of white women. Since it was first published, the magazine showed some concern for what it meant to be a modern woman: Should she work to earn an income, or should she be a homemaker? What type of work was acceptable to the respectable, modern girl who was lucky enough to have received a secondary or even tertiary education? Being a modern woman was a privilege only granted to white women, and the only interest in work for black women involved debating whether white or black women made better maids and caretakers. Several writers noted that as women entered different fields of employment, there was increased competition between women and men for the same positions. A range of articles debated which career choices were better suited to women, so that they would not compete with men. During this time, the hard-working and successful man was still considered crucial to the masculine identity

so typical of the heroes of short stories; for some the ideal was not incompatible with that of a working woman. For others, women became responsible for allowing men to pursue this masculine ideal, since they made way for them in the workforce. An advocate for separate women's work, writing under the name 'Laura Pendennis', broached the subject of black competition in an opinion piece titled 'Woman in South Africa. Topics of interest to all: A problem of the future' (Feb 1914: 58).<sup>8</sup> In it, the author notes that it would not be too long before the rate paid to black or coloured men would affect the rate paid to white artisans, which meant women had a role of economic importance:

We cannot, without misgiving, look forward to the day when female labour, as well as coloured labour, will compete with man in all those fields of work in South Africa to which both sexes seem competent to enter. It is difficult to believe that the result can be other than a general lowering of remuneration. The woman's movement is a revolt against her limitations, and a claim to live her own life. In her determination to insist on her recognition as a definite factor in modern life, she may conceivably enter a congested labour market, bringing another element into an already disturbed industrialism. ('Laura Pendennis' Feb 1914: 58)

Here 'Laura Pendennis' takes a conservative view of the role of women, which highlights the labour-related competition between black and white as a gender issue of particular concern to female readers. The argument on whether or not women should work placed the emphasis on job competition between black and white, yet the argument turned in favour of women at the cost of black labourers. 'Laura Pendennis' strongly defended her view in reaction to 'indignant correspondents' in an article in the next month's issue, entitled 'Feminine facts and fallacies' (March 1914: 48). These 'indignant correspondents' believed an average minimum wage should be set for men and women, and that there was room for women to enter the workforce. That women should be allowed to work was evidently the more popular, or perhaps vociferously supported, viewpoint as 'Laura Pendennis' no longer contributed (or at least not under that name) to the magazine after the last irate article. Articles supporting the view that women should be more cautious on entering the workforce at the expense of the home continued to appear during the war years.<sup>9</sup> The general consensus was that blacks should not compete with whites for the same positions. Concern for their own economic status and rights as women ensured that any idea to uplift blacks to the same plane as whites was totally abandoned. The idea that the black man still needed to progress to the same level as whites was replaced with the notion that they were intrinsically different, so each race should perform the type of labour for which it was naturally suited.

In January 1912 the idea of differentiating between work better suited to blacks, so that they would not be in competition with whites was first mooted. It gained traction in the period leading up to and during the First World War, when Germany's military perseverance was linked to the strength of its industries. Gradually the magazine's argument changed from keeping blacks in certain types of work in order to protect white male and female workers, to allowing blacks to work in specific industries which suited their nature and would help them develop those industries along commercial lines, so as to strengthen the country. The results remained the same – white workers were protected – but the reasoning behind it changed. In 1912 the idea was extended to the domain of education, where white women and black men began entering an arena previously inhabited by white men:

The native will have education whether we wish it or not. Surely it would be a wise policy to assist him to become a decent citizen of the State by widening the avenue of agricultural employment. At present in the effort to obtain work the native is brought into continual conflict with the white man, but if the country was properly developed there would be plenty of room for both .... We ought to train the native in all arts appertaining to agriculture, for which he is naturally suited, rather than ask him to learn handicrafts for which, in the present stage of the development of his own race, he has little use amongst his own people, and must therefore invade the realm of the white man. (June 1912: 63)

The acknowledged motive of removing blacks as competition for white workers quickly became a professed concern for blacks to develop at a tempo that would be beneficial to them. In time, the idea of separate development to benefit the different races completely replaced any open acknowledgement of a fear for white interests and labour competition in the magazine. The change did not mean women were no longer concerned with the effects of black labour on their own chances

of entering the workforce on equal footing with white men; it simply reflected an awareness of the rhetoric popularly used to discuss the position of black workers.

### **Black peril, womanhood and motherhood**

While women's changing roles with regard to men were key in arguments for separate development and work, the popular trope of women as the weaker and more vulnerable sex called for the separation of racial, social spheres. At different times there were calls for women to police the social boundaries between the races, in order to avoid being attacked by black men. This was first voiced in an article titled 'The black peril' by E.L. McPherson (January 1911: 29–30) and was echoed in a feature called 'From the Cape to the Congo: topics for South African women'<sup>10</sup> between January and December 1912. The 'black peril' was understood to mean the threat of white women being raped by black men. Reports of such attacks were often sensationalised and grossly exaggerated during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The most widely reported incidents occurred in 1886 in Natal; in 1902/3 in the Cape, Natal and Transvaal; and in various locations country-wide in 1906–8 and 1911/12 (Cornwell 1995: 108). While there were very few real cases of rape and most occurred outside the woman's home, the press reported on or discussed the black peril on almost a daily basis. The type of language used in newspaper articles and editorials, as in the magazine, fuelled the flames. 'The black peril' mentioned occasional shocking reports of native or coloured men being violent towards women or children – especially in districts other than Cape Town, where houseboys were used rather than maidservants (McPherson 1911: 29). McPherson was rather vague about the number of attacks, but nevertheless warned readers that actual incidences were under-reported. Inflating the number of attacks, and employing vague terminology added to the general hysteria which peaked in 1912 (Keegan 2001: 471). The word 'rape' was never used; instead phrases such as 'violence from native or coloured men towards women or children', 'a woman was roughly handled' and 'terrible experience' were employed, which leaves room for the reader to infer rape, even though it quite possibly simply referred to inappropriate behaviour on the part of black servants (McPherson 1911: 29). According to Keegan (2001: 470), this was because much of the fear of the 'black peril' was associated with the crumbling of cultural distinctions, rather than with a real threat to white women from black men in particular. Rape, as a sexual act, is symbolic here of the feared inversion of racial roles. Cornwell (1995: 107) notes: 'In the patriarchal construction of the sexual act, whether forced or not, the male is dominant and the female is subordinate: the political scandal of the Black Peril is the subjection of a woman of the dominant race to the power of a man of the subordinate race.' Therefore, the moral panic that accompanied the black peril scare was due to whites fearing a loss of control and of their position as the politically dominant minority.

Timothy Keegan (2001) identifies several reasons why white men felt their racial superiority was under threat. He argues that focusing on the danger to white women's virtue was linked to white men's masculinity coming under threat, specifically as women entered the public sphere in the colonies and back home. The rise of the New Woman, and the call for men and women to be held to the same moral standards, threatened what men saw as their masculine sphere and imperative. The threat of attack from black men gave white men an opportunity to emphasise the sanctity of white women's virtue, while establishing white men in their role as protector against black rapists (ibid: 461). White men not only felt that their position was under threat because women were a threat to their masculinity, but also because of the economic downturn after unification. The general economic recession went hand in hand with job scarcity and increased competition from semi-skilled black labourers willing to accept lower wages. As the pinnacle of the racial hierarchy, white men were expected to work and provide for their families. Being unemployed or dependent on black labour put into question their place at the apex of the hierarchy, and put racial insecurity at the heart of the black peril scares (ibid: 462).

In other periodicals (notably the September issue of *The Christian Express* [1911]) blame for the attacks was placed on immoral white men who had sex with black women. This, by popular agreement, gave inappropriate behaviour for black men to mimic, and angered them to the point where they attacked white women in retribution for their own women being used



by white men (Cornwell 1995: 162–178). Notably, in the magazine the onus was only on women to act in a way that would not allow such attacks to take place. While making white women agents of their own safety, this placed all the blame on their shoulders, without holding white men responsible. In this way the black peril scares served to strengthen the Victorian idea of women being naturally more virtuous and sexually pure (ibid: 180–181). At no point was it acceptable to suggest that the white women may have welcomed the sexual advances of the black men, further affirming the Victorian view of woman's asexuality.

In the magazine, the white man's role in this perceived threat was never dwelt on; the main concern was how white women treated black servants. In two articles, the responsibility of correctly policing the cultural boundaries between white women and their black houseboys was stressed. According to McPherson, and the anonymous writer of a number of articles in the Cape to Congo series, inappropriate behaviour on the part of women leads to familiarity; black men, being uncivilised, 'cannot help themselves' and this leads to the woman being attacked. As the mothers of the race, women were particularly tasked with ensuring that the race did not degenerate – they had to guard against miscegenation and ensure that their children were correctly brought up as proud members of the Saxon race. The first point may have been more of a public concern when discussing black men attacking white women, but in the articles the main threat which McPherson identified was linked to the second point. McPherson suggested that blacks' behaviour should be carefully regulated, with clear guidelines on where blacks are allowed to go: they should never be allowed in the bedroom 'for any other purpose than of scrubbing or cleaning, the bedmaking or other necessary duties being performed by a woman; never to have morning coffee served in the bedrooms by male servants'. In addition, she suggested white women should never 'allow children, and especially girls, to be left in charge of a male servant or to be taken out by him ... talk familiarly with a male servant or permit one's children to do so .... appear out of one's room half dressed, or to let one's little girls be seen half clothed' (McPherson 1911: 29–30). The reasoning was that white women grew complacent around the well-dressed houseboy because he looked civilised: 'We should treat them [native and coloured] with perfect courtesy, but at the same time there should not be the least familiarity, for we must never forget that, under the veneer of civilisation, they have the uncontrolled desires and impulses of primitive man' (ibid: 30). The topical term 'veneer of civilization' was used by several authors (Cornwell 1995: 90). Here, McPherson uses it to suggest that the black man's European clothing serves as little more than a mask or a way for him to appear more acceptable to the European coloniser. Chennels (2004: 71) notes 'that masking is never so successful that a mask is not recognized as a disguise and that mimicry allows both the mimicking medium and the voice or gesture that is being mimicked to be simultaneously recognizable'. In the *South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal*, McPherson calls out the mask as the veneer of civilisation. In light of the mission school articles discussed earlier, this implies that the civilising mission is only a theatre production complicit in giving the colonised their masks and acting/mimicking ability, again showing that the colonisers feared what they saw as colonialism's legitimising role, namely to bring civilisation to colonised peoples. Englishwomen looked down on blacks who wore traditional clothing, especially if it did not cover much of their bodies, and wanted black workers to dress more modestly (i.e. more European). But, when the black worker complied, s/he was seen as a problematic 'wolf in sheep's clothing' and a threat to white dominance, rather than as a more successful climber of the 'civilisation ladder'.

Linked to this fear of attack from the uncivilised is a call to separate the races, for the sake of the children. This centred on the ever-prevalent colonial fear of white degeneration upon contact with uncivilised locations and races. The fears that the next generation would degenerate was closely linked to Social Darwinism and the concept of racial progress, according to which a race was either civilised or uncivilised, based on the extent to which it had evolved, but such evolution was considered reversible. White men and women in Africa were deemed to degenerate as a race, due to miscegenation, or the notion that any whites who remained in Africa would succumb to an environment that produced only races that were inferior on the evolutionary plane (ibid: 26). Therefore, the fear was that if they did not act correctly or create the correct environment, whites would become more like the Africans surrounding them and their race would degenerate – a disgrace to the Saxon race. This fear may have greatly affected the white readership, whose role as mothers

made them responsible for rearing their own children – the next generation. This gave them a sacred role in creating a strong nation which would progress up the ‘civilisation scale’. In ‘The black peril’ McPherson (1911: 30) quotes Mrs. J.R. Cuthbert (a respected Rand Pioneer Lady) who, in an interview with the *Cape Times*, 18 May 1910, said:

Their language should remain a closed book to our children. Their very gestures can at times be an offence. How then can it be right for children to be trusted to their care? They are kindhearted and mean well by the child but their lack of refinement and of the elements of modesty are a perpetual menace to our little ones.

As proof of the degenerating effects of early exposure to black servants, she urges the reader to read local novelist, Nelly Fincher’s, *The Heir of Brendiford* – a fictional account of a white boy from a noble English family living in South Africa, whose mother allows him to be looked after by a black servant. The boy is later removed from South Africa when his parents learn that he heard his Zulu friend and caretaker talk about sex, which robs him of his innocence. Later in the book he returns to Natal, but because the damage has already been done he commits the ultimate racial degradation by having a child with a Zulu woman, making him no longer fit to be the heir to the house of Treloar (Fincher 1909).<sup>11</sup> In the novel, as in Cuthbert’s warning, the white boy learned Zulu from his carer, Umteuquah, who even saved his life on two occasions. It was not through intent but simply because the boy heard Umteuquah’s rude conversations with black girls that the ill effects were brought to bear (ibid: 50–53). This shows that even though he meant well, the black man’s lack of modesty, due to his uncivilised nature, caused harm. The moral dilemma in the novel is not the miscegenation at the end, which is touched on briefly; instead the authoress is more concerned with the central focus that propels the main plot: how white children are morally affected by interracial familiarity. This threat is specific to the home (women’s traditional realm) as it impacts on children, but not grown men: ‘Men go out into the world and do meet with evil, but they have acquired a strength of character, as men, to enable them to discriminate. But for a little child to be so obscene!’ (ibid: 59). This argument shows that the real fear was not in attack or rape, but in a levelling of the races which would greatly affect white women’s position on the racial hierarchy – any racial degeneration would be ascribed to their inability to fulfil their roles as mothers and to protect their children from the influences of the lower races. This explains why black women were also considered a bad influence on white children. Black women are never deemed physically dangerous, but it was believed that they would inadvertently have a negative influence on children because they were themselves uncivilised:

In all fairness, however, it must be said that the native woman... is tender and motherly and, according to her lights, does all she can for the child, but she is a primitive creature, and the child entrusted to her will early become acquainted with much that is undesirable. (McPherson 1911: 30)

Thus it is not just about safety, but also about policing the boundaries for fear of degradation. This fear was reinforced through the works of English authors such as Stanley Portal Hyatt, who believed colonials had already become degenerates because they lived in Africa with Africans, and that somehow reversed the evolutionary effect. It was therefore important for the racial integrity of the colonials to not allow their children to pick up any incorrect behaviour or ways of thinking from black caretakers (Chennels 2004: 76).

### **Blacks and the morally harmful effects of civilisation**

The view of blacks as uncivilised yet not intentionally harmful surfaces again in the magazine’s travel writing. In an article, ‘Mrs. Raffalovich’, Charlotte Mansfield is interviewed about her travel book *Via Rhodesia*. The author stresses that Mansfield managed to travel across Africa from Cape to Cairo as a single white female, with only black carriers as companions. Mansfield explained that she was able to finish the journey without any harm befalling her, in part, due to ‘the fact that her attendants were utterly uncivilised and really Nature’s gentlemen’ (Feb 1912: 52) – a concept as prevalent at the time as that of the ‘noble savage’. Several authors, including Fincher, believed Africans had picked up the white men’s bad qualities because they were exposed to the wrong sort, and, lacking civilisation at the time, were unable to discern which qualities of the white man it would be best to emulate (Cornwell 1995: 60–61). While this notion remained common and was used to support arguments for segregation, the idea that a lack of exposure to civilisation could see good qualities surfacing was

rather short-lived in the magazine. In terms of this view, blacks were generally good because they lived close to nature, despite being untaught in the finer things in life. This view of a race took an unexpected turn when applied to colonial women a month after the interview with Mansfield.

### Colonials as the racial ideal

The language of racial evolution and degeneration, used in the magazine to bolster readers' racial position, at times threatened it. The fear of racial degeneration was closely linked to the 'home' view of colonials. The magazine shows what Dubow (2006) brands imperialist and colonialist views: imperialists identified Britain as their home despite never having set foot in England, while colonialists identified themselves as 'Africanders' who viewed South Africa as their home country. In the magazine the two views coincided and at times overlapped to show a marked concern for the opinions of 'home', whilst trying to build a new South African identity. To be proud South Africans (Africanders), readers had to live in such a way that home-born men and women could not accuse them of allowing racial degeneration (Chennels 2004: 73). One way to do this (especially prominent in the early years of the magazine's publication) was to replicate the culture of the British upper class in South Africa (ibid: 78). This was done by keeping up with British fashion and gossip in 'Our letter from overseas'; hearing visiting ladies' views on their country in order to validate their own society in comparison with home society; and creating a social upper class for themselves (reporting on the social activities and outfits worn by the wives and daughters of prominent politicians). Even the monthly magazine features mirrored those of British magazines such as *The Woman at Home*. Chennels notes that such mimicry was common amongst colonial writers, who wanted to show that they should be taken as seriously as British writers. Despite efforts to establish 'little Englands' in Africa, the view that South African women could simply not live up to the 'home' ideal prevailed. The writers were themselves complicit in this 'inferiority view', as they regularly insisted 'home' goods or ladies were better than their South African counterparts, often even in the same issue that promoted South African industries, its natural beauty and local ladies' talents. As with racial differences, the differences between colonials and British-born men and women were evident in their physical characteristics as well as their behaviour. While British women were described as leisured, well-manicured, white-skinned and socially aware, the colonials did not (by circumstance) share these attributes. Colonials were brown-skinned, large, energetic, hard-working, open, without social reserve and tomboyish – traits which were initially looked down on by British visitors. In an article by popular British author, May Baldwin (March 1912: 50), colonial women's lack of knowledge of social behaviour and reserve is indirectly linked to racial vocabulary. In 'The South African schoolgirl', written after her visit to several South African girls' schools for research purposes, she noted that English and Dutch girls were

very resourceful, useful and independent, and secondly, that they were more easily moved than schoolgirls in England. That, of course, is the result of environment and the life they lead, in many cases in wild or lonely parts, which makes them more the *children of nature*, a very desirable thing in some ways. (ibid., emphasis added)

'Children of nature' may have been closer to Mansfield's 'nature's gentlemen' than was comfortable for the colonial reader. It seems at first that Baldwin (ibid.) meant it in a positive sense, i.e., of being simpler and closer to nature, until she notes that her visits to their homes were 'far from civilization', and warns that they tend to be overly familiar and that familiarity breeds contempt, so young women should show some 'noble' reserve.

This is an insult to colonial women's parenting, and showcases the view popularly held in the metropole that colonial women had already degenerated – a view, along with that of British superiority, that surfaced in several of the magazine's short stories which paint colonial characters as unrefined in contrast to the heroine of the story, who is from 'home'. Two examples are: 'A timely interference: a story of South Africa' (May 1912: 21–23) and 'A wild rose' (August 1912: 21–22) by Mrs. Chastel de Boinville. Both appeared in 1912 and both showed colonials to be larger, with browner skin – characteristics typically associated with blacks, in order to contrast them to British women. An example of such a comparison is the 'Lady Pioneers on the Rand: Mrs. Waldegrave Blaine', one of the first white women in Swaziland who was, she claimed, admired by the black queen for her slender white figure in contrast to the queen's own, larger dark body (May 1913: 36). In the

short stories these stock characteristics were often applied to show colonials as inferior to the white-skinned British-born heroes and heroines who knew how to act in social situations, while the colonial women were becoming more like the black women lower down on the racial hierarchy.

Notably, the insistence of British superiority reached a climax in 1912, when the black peril scares made women more attentive to racial degeneration, supporting Keegan's theory that such moral scares were fuelled by white racial insecurity. White women clearly also could have felt that their racial position was under attack, though from the metropole, which may have made them more complicit in the hype around the black peril scares. This would have given them greater impetus to see it as their sacred vocation to police the boundaries between the races, in order to prevent their children from degenerating. Giving in to racial scares was one reaction in the magazine; a more lasting reaction was to change their colonial characteristics into more desirable racial attributes.

The magazine's writers responded to the negative view of colonial women by not portraying typically British women characters as the ideal, and not emphasising British qualities in their interviewees. Instead, these colonial characteristics were depicted as the new ideal, rather than as a sign of degeneration.<sup>12</sup> From 1913 there was a marked push to show energetic, resourceful and sun-kissed women as the ideal. Examples include positive portraits of the 'Lady Pioneers of the Rand'; monthly features showing interviews with some of the women living on the Rand from 1888 when it was but a tent town. They were shown to be the type of women needed to develop and civilise South Africa, exactly because they were resourceful, robust and energetic, and not too hung-up on social niceties. These characteristics were established as positives, and then taken further as a natural part of colonial-born women in the short stories. Even authors who had previously portrayed British women as the ideal now turned a critical eye on British customs. One example is Chastel de Boinville's 'A farmer's daughter' (1913: 21), in which a mother tells her daughter not to worry about her incorrect 'At Home' cards:

Winnie, dear, I am sorry you felt ashamed, for the ignorance was very natural. You are a little Colonial girl brought up on a South African farm – nobody would expect you to be familiar with the unwritten – and often absurd – laws of so-called *Society*. My little girl, the trifles that obsess small, narrow minds must never trammel you. I don't say that it is not right to do things as they should be done, but these are, after all, such trivialities, and the big things that matter, child, are honour, truth, loyalty, true charity.

In the story the villain is, unconventionally, a British-born snob who pretends to be wealthy, and is only after Winnie's family's money. The hero, on the other hand, is a 'fine type of a well-to-do Natal farmer' (ibid: 22), who sweeps in on horseback to save the day when Winnie is abducted (ibid: 21–23). Colonial heroines becoming the fictional ideal in successive short stories shows that the South African writers felt a corrective was necessary, as the hero and heroine types in romance and melodrama changed to reflect the values of society (Calweti 1977: 6). 'A farmer's daughter' was the first short story which the editor encouraged readers to turn to, in the editorial (April 1913: 2), despite the fact that the storyline was not novel or the writing of better quality than the author's previous works. This suggests that the editor thought the story had added value for the reader.

Colonial qualities were celebrated in 'Lady Pioneers' and in an added monthly feature, 'Daughters of South Africa', which focused on (mainly Dutch) women born in South Africa. After reporting on the woman's education and family, she was described, typically, as energetic, hard-working, open and friendly – characteristics which are typical of colonial-borns. For example, 'A daughter of South Africa: Mrs. George A. Roth' was shown to have 'the Colonial resourcefulness' needed to help improve the country, as she could design and make dresses comparable to imported clothes, but at ten per cent of the cost. She even made her own chutney, which won bronze at the SA Exhibition in London and gold in the Pretoria Society of Agriculture and Industries. Mrs. Roth advocated hard work over excessive personal grooming, and urged women to do on a small scale what could not yet be done on a large scale, by throwing 'herself heart and soul into the work' (February 1913: 35). In general, this view coincided with that of the ideal modern woman who worked hard – whether in the home, in a paid job or by doing social work. The magazine described the modern woman as athletic, healthy and courageous, when necessary. This view of the modern woman existed in Britain, but did not gain popularity until the First World War, when it became possible (and necessary) for women to take on jobs previously done by men. The economic impact of the war also required women to be more resourceful. As a result, in the monthly 'Letter from overseas', women who were energetic,

hard-working and resourceful were increasingly portrayed as the ideal, rather than high-society women of leisure. This helped to reinforce the view of the colonial ideal in the magazine.

### **The two white races of South Africa**

The *South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* not only focused on Englishwomen as the target audience, but also on Dutch women who were sufficiently anglicised to appreciate the content and read the language. The magazine therefore had to juggle the concerns of two races in its pages, without alienating either. This meant that despite the strong hierarchical view and differentiation between races, the two white races of South Africa had to be portrayed as being on the same plane. Racism between English South Africans and Afrikaners was not portrayed in the magazine, but its existence was lamented. Here, 'racialism' is used, since the term was employed in the magazine to mean 'racism'. In his philosophical work, *In my father's house*, Kenneth Appiah differentiates between racialism and racism, noting that the former is the 19<sup>th</sup>-century notion that heritable qualities can be used to divide humanity into certain races, each with its own, specific and set characteristics (physical and psychological). 'Extrinsic racism' is the same division of the races and the identification of heritable characteristics in each, along with the moral distinctions which are based on these characteristics (Appiah 1992: 13). In the magazine, extrinsic racism between the two white races is never voiced, yet in the country the distinction between racial characteristics was subject to racial animosity as painful memories of the South African War (1899–1902) still lingered. Clearly, in the South Africa of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century 'racialism' was understood to mean the same as Appiah's definition of 'racism'.<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that the problem of 'racialism' was deemed to exist only between the white races. Although the magazine clearly treats blacks in a racist way, the writers at the time did not identify it as such, perhaps because they and their editors found treating black people as inferior so natural that it did not occur to them that this was a moral issue.

Racialism between the white races came to the fore more strongly during periods when an attempt was made to anglicise the education system, or a push was made to fight on Britain's side during the Great War, and again as English South Africans responded to growing Afrikaner nationalism (Barber 1999: 74; Dubow 2006: 199; Ross 2000: 84). Evidently this was a societal problem, judging from repeated calls for an end to racialism by both English and Dutch interviewees and writers. Immediately post-unification there was a marked effort on the part of politicians to promote conciliation between the two white races, particularly after the South African War (Barber 1999: 60; Dubow 2006: 161). The magazine appears to have had the same aim, as hatred, disdain or even competition between the two races was discouraged, possibly in an attempt at reconciliation. There is also a link between this decision and the fact that the magazine, for all its claims to not introduce politics into its pages, supported certain political parties in terms of its selective reportage. During this time the magazine endorsed the view of the ruling South African Party (SAP), that conciliation between English and Afrikaner (including Dutch and Boers) was necessary (Barber 1999: 60). The party and its female supporters were often reported on when the Women's SAP had a fundraiser or social evening. In particular, Dutch members of the Women's SAP would call for an end to racialism. There was a clear attempt to promote positive relations between English and Afrikaners by conceiving of the latter as two classes: Dutch and Boers, with the former seen as upper class Afrikaners. Because they had much in common with the white Englishwomen of the same class, they were easily included under the terms 'our readers' and 'South African women' in a show of conciliation. In only three early entries in the magazine are the Dutch, rather than the Boers, connected with assumed poverty and a lack of education in general, as well as a lack of personal hygiene and stubbornness. Two of these were on accounts from 'Lady Pioneers' who told of encounters with Boers before or during the war, and one was on the need for books to be made available to Dutch children on farms. In all these references negative characteristics are insinuated, never clearly articulated (May 1911: 20; March 1912: 19; March 1912: 52). Generally, however, most writers did not dwell on racial stereotypes related to the Dutch. Short story writers, especially, avoided according a race (Dutch or British) to a main character, hence a farmer in a short story could just as easily be English as Dutch, and only the names of characters could identify their race. Boers were generally only side characters, as they were very poor farmers or bywoners.

The lower-class Afrikaners, i.e., Boers, proved more difficult to reconcile with upper-class white Englishwomen. In other works they were clearly shown to be an inferior race to the British, and only by creating a common enemy out of the Germans and cowards were Boers portrayed as rounded characters on the same plane as white, English-speaking women. The difference between the Dutch and Boers is never explained in the magazine, but is rather accepted as well known ('Bookmark' March 1915: 3) – only a study of the literature reviewed in the magazine highlights their differences. Because people do not read any text in isolation, other texts would have influenced the meaning readers derived from the text at hand. In each issue of the magazine there was a page where 'Bookmark' reviewed recently-published novels. These books influenced how Boers were depicted in the magazine, i.e., the Dutch were upper-middle class, educated and often urbanised, while in books like *I too hath known* Boers were seen as poor, uneducated, generally filthy and backwards (Baker 1911). There were more extreme views, such as Stanley Portal Hyatt's *The makers of mischief*, which stereotyped Boers as naturally lazy, dirty and dishonest (Hyatt 1911: 93; 'Bookmark' Dec 1911: 3). The negative stereotype may have been upheld by many readers, but was never supported in the magazine itself.

Pre-World War I, the short-story writers failed to reconcile the English with the lower-class Boers through romance, and it was only in reaction to the war that a particular Boer trait was used to portray them in a positive light. Prior to 1916, no one had directly dealt with events of the South African War. The need for conciliation between Boer and Brit was expressed, but the events which unfolded in the concentration camps were not dealt with in articles. As a general observation, this resembles today's popular English and Afrikaans woman's magazines where they might mention apartheid, but what actually took place during apartheid is not generally dwelt on. The same was true for the *South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal*. At most, contributors regretted any racial tension or mention thereof in relation to the war. Even in an article on Mrs. Brandt's *Petticoat Commando*, published in 1913, the war itself is not dwelt on. The writer mentions Mrs. Brandt's daring and her wish that it would not incite racialism: 'One hopes it will in no way fan the smouldering fire of racialism. Mrs. Brandt says it was written with the sole object of an ennobling, softening effect on the present strained relations' (June 1913: 58). Her courage was celebrated as an example to women to be gutsy and capable, but the omission of her cause is glaringly obvious.

The short stories in the magazine did not deal with the South African War, or with feelings of enmity and bitterness between English and Afrikaners. War stories were never set in that period, if Afrikaner characters appeared in them, despite the fact that historical romance was a much-loved genre, judging from the book reviews. In the short stories any historical setting predated the South African War or the action would be set in England. To showcase a man's bravery, the story would be set in the 'Kafir Wars', although details of the war were omitted. During the First World War, the dangers that the Boers had faced in the various 'Kafir Wars' were indirectly compared to the actions of the brave soldiers of the Springbok Brigade (mostly white, English-speaking South Africans and a few Afrikaners) – the sons, brothers, fathers and husbands of the readers. During the Great War, 'Our poets' corner' showcased readers' poems, with many works celebrating the life of a fallen soldier, describing his deeds while mentioning his eternal sleep/grave. In one example, a poem in the magazine helped to show that the Afrikaners and young English soldiers were not so very different: in 'The Voortrekker', Gilbert E. Chittenden (March 1916: 53) describes the final resting place of a Boer under a tree, and praises his bravery in facing the black horde of Zulus, using imagery similar to that employed in war poems on the First World War. The Boers were comparable to British or South African soldiers in respect of their bravery in the face of terrible danger, and their willingness to sacrifice their lives for a fight they believed in. This shared moral character, rather than class, became the means through which Boers were often portrayed in the magazine on the same racial plane as the readers. The first writer to manage to take this idea further and use the hatred left over from South African War to further the idea of conciliation was W.V. Campbell (November 1917: 52–53) in 'Old Jacobus Hugo'.

'Old Jacobus Hugo' was the first short story to frankly deal with the fact that Afrikaners did not want to fight for Britain. In the story the Boer heroine is married to an Englishman, to the chagrin of

her father, Jacobus, and her husband goes to fight in the Great War on the side of England, which he sees as his patriotic duty. His more successful brother stays, which old Jacobus initially thinks is the better choice until he learns of the atrocities of the German armies in Belgium. Jacobus then begins to 'terg' (tease) the brother who stayed behind for his cowardice. This would probably have struck a chord with the reader, as cowards who refused to volunteer to fight in the war had been portrayed, in almost every issue of the magazine since the outbreak of the war, as the worst kind of men. The reader was, in fact, pulled in to identify with the old Boer through their disdain for cowardly men who did not answer their country's call for help. Finally, the Afrikaner even allowed his own son to go and fight for Britain against the 'swine' who murdered women and children. That the 'swine' were the Boers' former allies, the Germans, is probably not as material as the fact that the brother who refused to fight is now shown to refuse to protect women and children in a war – something Jacobus looked down on, since his own wife had died in the South African War while he was away fighting for their freedom. The old Afrikaner can see in his son-in-law the bravery and loyalty needed in true South Africans, and in the end he identifies himself as a South African, rather than an Afrikaner, when he tells the cowardly brother:

Who do you think is the better South African? I, who fought and lost a son for a lost cause years ago; whose daughter has lost her man fighting for my former enemies; I, who have sent my son to fight, and who am myself trying to link English and Dutch in support of Botha, who has fought and is still fighting for South Africa? Or you, an Englishman, who thinks so little of your country that you can shelter behind your pretended responsibility... while those murderers are still trying to murder your own countrymen and enslave your women and children by foul means the devil invented? (Campbell, November 1917: 53)

Bear in mind that this argument was read by women who most likely already supported the cause of the Empire. To them, this helped to forge ties between the English and the Boers – especially because the latter had also experienced the atrocities of war and were willing to fight for their country. That Afrikaners were brave fighters is also highlighted in the monthly honour roll that featured photographs of soldiers who had fought bravely in Delville Wood. In general, pride in South African's contributions to the war effort helped lessen feelings of racial schism (Dubow 2006: 202; Lambert 2009: 608). Photographs of Afrikaner soldiers were often accompanied with more detail than those of English soldiers, and there were several articles on Botha and Smuts as well as their wives' war efforts. The war, the shared enemy in the form of the Germans, and cowards unwilling to fight for their country became the means through which the magazine managed to show Afrikaners (Boers and Dutch) as rounded characters and helped combat racialism.

### **Warrior Teutonic races and child-like blacks**

During the war the two white races of South Africa were idealised as warriors of Teutonic stock, which connected them to masculine qualities, while blacks were portrayed as either effeminate or child-like. Instead of the terrible physical threat they occupied during the black peril scares in 1912, the war period saw blacks being portrayed increasingly as 'eternal children'. Their level of civilisation was connected to specific spheres of work and children's stories. In 1914, 'Bookmark' introduced works that focused on black characters, such as Miss Metelerkamp's collection of South African folklore tales entitled *Outa Karel's stories*, illustrated by Mrs. Penstone (December 1914: 3) and Mr. F. Horace Rose's *Golden glory*, a finalist in Hodder and Stoughton's competition for the best novel by a writer in the Overseas Dominions ('Bookmark' September 1915: 3). From February 1917, monthly stories in the magazine featured black main characters – an example is 'Native folk tales' by E.L. McPherson. These folktales featured fantastical occurrences, such as talking animals or a frog king capable of swallowing a princess and sagely delivering her home (McPherson February 1917: 56, 60; March 1917: 49–50, 54; April 1917: 49; Anonymous June 1917: 19; Anonymous July 1917: 19). Six months later, McPherson wrote what appears to be another folktale, but without black characters: 'The kingdom of the dead' featured no specified race, but dealt with superstitions held by people living in tent-like structures (McPherson, September 1917: 53). In fact, the folktales of the Basuto had been seamlessly replaced by children's stories that also showed anthropomorphic animals and played with size to make the fantastical possible (McPherson, January 1918: 35). There is no difference in the portrayal of blacks in the folktales, the only stories featuring them as central characters in the magazine, and the characters in the children's stories. This created the impression that black

civilisation had not evolved past the level of European children who still believed in fairytales. Using familial terms to discuss the racial development of blacks increasingly became the support for separate development, which would ultimately lay the foundations for apartheid and secure the dominant position of white women.

## Conclusion

The *South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* can be said to have commented on, and reinforced, different racial views over time. With regard to blacks, the white man's burden and the threat of attacks slowly faded from the conversation, but fears of racial competition and degeneration remained. These arguments affected readers' views, as white women who were part of the civilising mission, possible victims of rape, workers competing for space with black men, and mothers protecting the white race from degeneration. In reaction to the threat of degeneration, the colonial character was idealised. The Dutch were reconciled with the English through class, while the Boers were reconciled through their bravery and sacrifice in one war that changed perceptions of South African soldiers in the Great War. The cultural influence of the *South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* cannot be underestimated. As Steven Fischer (2005: 295) rightly notes, 'the chief means of communication with the world beyond one's town before the First World War remained the periodical: the newspaper or magazine. Reading these brought the world into one's home, and their continuing importance for, and effect on, the era cannot be stressed too strongly.'

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> 'Black peril' is a term often used in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century South Africa to refer to white women being attacked and raped by black men.

<sup>2</sup> Studies on the history of English-speaking South Africans during the 20<sup>th</sup> century have increased since the 1980s, with the majority focusing on the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In recent years, English South Africans have been studied by, amongst others, Jonathan Hyslop, Andy Thompson, Christopher Saunders, John Mackenzie, John Lambert and Saul Dubow.

<sup>3</sup> Research has been done on women's magazines during the same period, but with the focus on women from other ethnic groups: see Marijke du Toit (2003) and L. Kruger's (1991) studies on Afrikaner women, and Lynn M. Thomas' (2006) study on the perception of femininity in *Bantu world*.

<sup>4</sup> See McGann's (1991) *Textual condition* for more on how the role of the editor, layout and illustrations can inform the meaning of a text. McGann explains that literary works typically secure their effects through means other than the purely linguistic. Instead, each text operates by deploying a double helix of perceptual codes: linguistic and bibliographical (which include illustrations, font and placement) – all of which inform the meaning within the linguistic codes.

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., 'A wild rose: a complete story' (Chastel de Boinville 1912: 21).

<sup>6</sup> In the magazine the hierarchy is implicit and is revealed over several issues. John Lambert (2009: 606) and Julia Bush (2000: 68) give a clearer explanation of the hierarchical view held by the British in general. In the magazine, the different hierarchical positions of the white races were blurred, and the notion of the white, English male being superior to the white, English female was problematised.

<sup>7</sup> Dubow (2006) points out that the Empire's civilising mission had increasingly fallen into disrepute during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>8</sup> 'Woman in South Africa: topics of interest to all' was usually authored 'by K', but appeared anonymously in the 1914 February issue. Only the reaction by 'Laura Pendennis' in the next issue suggests that this is her opinion.

<sup>9</sup> See, e.g., 'Women's attitude after the war', *South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal*, September 1916.

<sup>10</sup> See 'From the Cape to the Congo. Topics for South African women: black peril', July 1912: 67.

<sup>11</sup> Dubow (1987: 75–77) notes the 'horror of miscegenation' as a prominent form of racism in South Africa during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Closely linked to eugenics, it warned against the dilution of pure racial stock and the decline of white civilisation.

<sup>12</sup> This is in contrast to certain individual literary works which Chennels (2004) focused on in his article on white female novelists in Rhodesia.

<sup>13</sup> Appiah (1992: 13) notes that 'racialism' meant different things during different times, and for different dialects, which could account for the different meaning applied to the word during this period in South Africa.



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