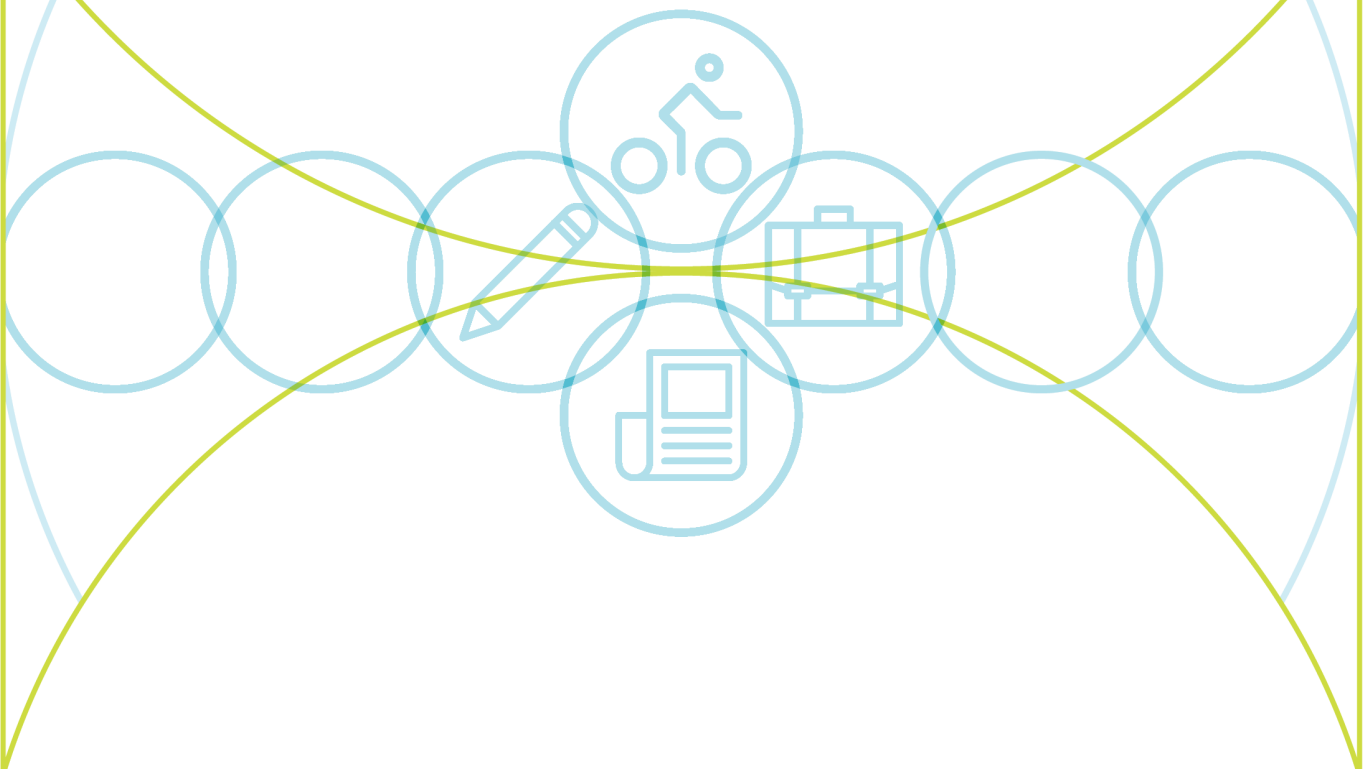


FROM EMPOWERMENT TO EMANCIPATION:
AN EXPLORATION OF DESIGN CITIZENSHIP THROUGH
DESIGN ACTIVISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

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DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I, Fatima Cassim (student number: 04236874) declare that this thesis is my own, original work. Despite the financial support received from both national and international research-related institutions, all findings, theoretical interpretations and opinions expressed in this thesis are my own. However, where someone else's work was used due acknowledgement was given and reference was made according to departmental requirements.

Fatima Cassim

30 August 2018

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ABSTRACT

Owing to the ubiquity of design in contemporary culture, there is a proliferation of new roles for design especially within the context of design for the common good; one such example includes design activism, which aims to instil and enable social, environmental and political agency among citizens. However, unlike design activism, design citizenship is a new concept that lacks a concrete theoretical framework. Accordingly, this thesis uses a constructivist grounded theory methodology to present a substantive theory of design citizenship by exploring the relationship between design activism and citizenship in South Africa. For data generation purposes, the fieldwork comprised an analysis of design interventions that addressed pertinent social issues faced by citizens in two cities, namely Pretoria and Cape Town. To this end, open-ended interviews were held with the research participants, who included participants, facilitators and sponsors (corporate and non-corporate) of a sample of design interventions. The empirical evidence generated through the grounded theory process points towards a Y-shaped model of design citizenship that situates the social phenomenon of design citizenship at the intersection of design activism and critical citizenship, and thereby suggests the causal relationship between the two. The model comprises three overarching processes, namely awakening awareness, igniting agency and sustaining a design thinking impetus. The disruptive and transformative nature of design citizenship, facilitated by these three processes over a sustained period of time, suggests that design provides common ground for citizens which in turn affords them with an opportunity to move from being merely empowered to being emancipated.

Keywords: design activism, critical citizenship, design citizenship, design thinking, constructivist grounded theory, design interventions, design for the common good, social innovation, disruptive aesthetics, play, aesthetic education, design research

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY.....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	ix
 CHAPTER ONE: SITUATING THE RESEARCH	 1
1.1. Introduction.....	1
1.2. Background and problem identification.....	2
1.3. Initial literature review and conceptual framework.....	11
1.3.1. Design activism.....	12
1.3.2. Design citizenship.....	18
1.4. Research question.....	20
1.5. Research paradigm.....	21
1.6. Outline of the thesis.....	23
 2. CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY – GROUNDED THEORY.....	 25
2.1. Introduction.....	25
2.2. The emergence and development of grounded theory.....	26
2.3. Constructivist grounded theory.....	34
2.3.1. Principles of social constructivist grounded theory.....	34
2.3.1.1. Treating the research process as a social construction.....	35
2.3.1.2. Being a reflexive researcher.....	36
2.3.1.3. Using an abductive mode of reasoning.....	37
2.3.1.4. Entering the world of the research participant.....	39
2.3.2. The potential of constructivist grounded theory for social justice research.....	41
2.3.3. Criteria for evaluating a constructivist grounded theory.....	44
2.4. Summary.....	46
 3. CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN – GROUNDED THEORY APPLIED.....	 48
3.1. Introduction.....	48
3.2. Data generation.....	48
3.2.1. Research background and units of analysis.....	50
3.2.2. Selection of participants – sample profile, recruitment and ethical considerations.....	51
3.2.3. Intensive interviewing.....	57
3.3. Data analysis.....	61
3.3.1. Initial coding.....	61
3.3.2. Focused coding.....	65
3.3.3. Constant comparative analysis.....	66
3.3.4. Memo writing.....	68
3.4. Generating and articulating a substantive theory.....	69
3.5. Summary.....	71

4. CHAPTER FOUR: THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF DESIGN CITIZENSHIP	73
4.1. Introduction.....	73
4.2. People and places of design citizenship.....	74
4.2.1. Plugging in.....	81
4.2.1.1. Creating a platform and public for engagement.....	83
4.2.1.2. Massaging conversations.....	90
4.2.1.3. Aligning values.....	101
4.3. Processes of design citizenship.....	107
4.3.1. Awakening awareness.....	109
4.3.1.1. Suspending oneself.....	111
4.3.1.2. Finding common ground through shared experiences.....	116
4.3.2. Igniting agency.....	122
4.3.2.1. Taking risks.....	124
4.3.2.2. Presenting an alternate narrative.....	129
4.3.3. Sustaining a design thinking impetus.....	136
4.3.3.1. Becoming a change agent.....	138
4.3.3.2. Educating oneself and others through new networks.....	142
4.4. The phenomenon of design citizenship as experienced by the city actors.....	146
4.5. Summary.....	149
 5. CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF THE SUBSTANTIVE THEORY OF DESIGN CITIZENSHIP	150
5.1. Introduction.....	150
5.2. People and places of design citizenship.....	150
5.3. The social processes that constitute the phenomenon of design citizenship.....	157
5.3.1. Awakening awareness.....	158
5.3.2. Igniting agency.....	160
5.3.3. Sustaining a design thinking impetus.....	163
5.4. The Y-shaped model of design citizenship.....	166
5.5. Summary.....	170
 6. CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUDING THE RESEARCH.....	172
6.1. Introduction.....	172
6.2. Overview of the study.....	172
6.3. Self-evaluation of meeting the criteria of a grounded theory study.....	174
6.3.1. Credibility.....	174
6.3.2. Originality.....	175
6.3.3. Resonance.....	175
6.3.4. Usefulness.....	176
6.4. Strengths and limitations of the study.....	177
6.5. Contributions of the study.....	178
6.6. Conclusion and recommendations for further research.....	180
 SOURCES CONSULTED.....	182
APPENDICES.....	194

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:	From a pyramid model to a pancake model of society and organisations	3
Figure 2:	Four paradigms for the analysis of social theory	22
Figure 3:	Ordering of constructivist grounded theory methods.....	49
Figure 4:	Structure of the <i>Four Ps framework of design citizenship</i>	74
Figure 5:	Hello there (shadow stencil), Cool Capital, Pretoria 2014	110
Figure 6:	Word play, City Walk Saturdays, Cape Town 2015	114
Figure 7:	The three, drip-feeding processes of design citizenship.....	147
Figure 8:	Design citizenship's value trajectory over time	148
Figure 9:	Designer–client relationships	152
Figure 10:	Huybrecht's typology of democratic dialogues and the roles for designers ...	159
Figure 11:	The Y-shaped model of design citizenship.....	167
Figure 12:	Knowledge cycle: using and accumulating knowledge	176

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:	The four orders of design.....	6
Table 2:	An overview of the different conceptualisations of design activism found in contemporary design discourse.....	17
Table 3:	Denzin and Lincoln's eight moments of qualitative enquiry.....	25
Table 4:	Denzin and Lincoln's five phases of qualitative research.....	46
Table 5:	Example of line-by-line coding.....	64
Table 6:	Persona: driven designer	77
Table 7:	Persona: concerned citizen	78
Table 8:	Persona: confident corporate	79
Table 9:	Persona: obstinate (government) official	80
Table 10:	Design as a function versus design as a culture.....	154
Table 11:	Overview of the research findings	170

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Example of recruitment e-mail to a research participant.....	194
Appendix 2: Letter of informed form.....	195
Appendix 3: Sample of research participants	198
Appendix 4: Example of a case-based memo.....	200
Appendix 5: Example of a conceptual memo.....	201

CHAPTER ONE

SITUATING THE RESEARCH

1.1 Introduction

Design activism is not a new term or concept, but in contemporary design discourse it is used to describe creative interventions that enable social, political and environmental agency. Design activism therefore regards designers as active facilitators who engage citizens in a process of creative and positive transformation. Unlike design activism, design citizenship is a recent concept within design discourse and no theoretical framework exists in this regard. Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to use a grounded theory methodology to generate a substantive theory about the phenomenon of design citizenship by exploring the relationship between design activism and design citizenship within a South African context. Firstly, the main issue that this thesis addresses is the experiences of citizens who facilitate and/or participate in design interventions.¹

Design interventions can be broadly defined as acts or instances of design activism that are made visible by a formal or informal network of citizens. More specifically, design interventions are creative vehicles for public engagement and are specific to place. Such interventions are experimental in nature and therefore cannot be described in terms of a pre-given form but only in terms of their intention; they comprise material and immaterial design objects – as prompts, probes and provocations – that are assembled in an urban environment in a particular way and for a given time to address a specific issue or cause of concern to citizens. Much like design research, design interventions do not attempt merely to answer topical questions as a way to put them to rest, but their aim is rather to raise appropriate questions to prompt critical reflection about the given situation. This comparison between design research and design interventions is expressed by Halse and Boffi (2016:2247); they maintain that interventions “are increasingly seen as a research method, not to test a prefigured solution to a defined problem, but to enable new forms of experience, dialogue and awareness about the problematic to emerge”.

Following from the abovementioned description of design interventions, the stance taken in this thesis is that design interventions provide embodied experiences for all participants to confront their current circumstance(s) and to imagine an alternate solution, which is for the common good.

¹ While discussions on design activism and citizenship exist in design literature – Resnick (2015) and more recently Constandius and Botes (2018) – the vantage point of such discourse is formal design education, with a particular focus on highlighting student projects that aim to instil a socially responsible mindset in future design practitioners.

To this end, design interventions are used as the units of analysis to facilitate a qualitative, empirical exploration of the way that a sample of South African citizens experienced design interventions. Essentially, the theory that emerged from this exploration is a tale of two capital cities, namely Pretoria and Cape Town, since these were the sites of the design interventions that were selected for the fieldwork. The citizens' experiences, as described in their own words, are used to inform the substantive theory in order to better understand and articulate the contexts, meanings and processes of the social phenomenon. Hence, to reiterate, the analysis of design interventions is not the main focus of the study; instead it focuses on uncovering and theorising the related actions and experiences that the interventions afforded citizens. In addition to the theoretical contribution by way of the substantive theory of design citizenship, the thesis also makes a methodological contribution to design discourse by addressing the use and potential value of a constructivist grounded theory methodology for design research.

1.2 Background and problem identification

In her keynote address at a 2014 *Cumulus*² conference on design, "What's on: cultural diversity, social engagement and shifting education," Josephine Green (2014) explored the critical period of transformation that the world and its inhabitants have been experiencing. According to her, old views of the world do not make sense anymore, and science no longer holds the certainty that it once did. As such, Green (2014:[sp]) calls for new narratives and believes that "new worlds need new stories and new ways of thinking". She framed her discussion by referring to visual metaphors to elucidate her key ideas about how the world needs to embrace complexity through new organisational, cultural and leadership models. In particular, her diagrams of changing organisational and cultural models highlight a shift from a pyramid model to a pancake model. The pancake model, as the visual analogy in Figure 1 suggests, denotes a cyclical and inclusive system or network that moves away from linear hierarchies of old by distributing complexity more evenly. In addition, Green (2014) noted that the so-called pancake model is underpinned by the following characteristics: love, share and care. The structure of the pancake model and its characteristics resonate with contemporary design processes and more specifically with the characteristics of design thinking, namely empathy, collaboration, action and sustainability (Carroll, Goldman, Britos, Koh, Royalty & Hornstein 2010:41).

² *Cumulus* – the international association of universities and colleges of art, design and media – is a member-based, global organisation for art and design research. It was initiated in 1990 to build a dynamic, academic forum for art and design education by way of workshops, collaborative projects and conferences (What is Cumulus? [sa]).

The design methodology used for traditional product design has recently been adapted for contemporary use and is referred to as ‘design thinking’. The term ‘design thinking’ can be broadly defined as a problem-solving methodology that uses the designer’s sensibility and methods to match people’s needs with what is technically and contextually feasible (Brown 2009). The promotion of this popular conception of design thinking by the California-based design and innovation company, IDEO, and other design-related organisations coincided more or less with the growing discourse on the strategic value and contribution of design to business and innovation during the last decade (the *Design Management Journal* is one publication where this focus is evident). It is noteworthy that the widespread adoption of the term and implementation of design thinking during the first decade of the twenty-first century also coincided with the publication of Daniel Pink’s (2006) book, *A whole new mind*, which boldly claimed in its subtitle that “right-brainers will rule the future”. Pink (2006) argues for the need to develop and focus on right-brain thinking to complement the more traditional left-brain or scientific modes of reasoning to tackle complex problems. Similarly, Charles Owen (2007:16) also acknowledges the shortcomings of the linear, scientific and pyramid model, used for decision making by governments and institutional leaders. Hence, Owen (2007) appeals to designers to play a central role in decision making by applying their thinking or cognitive skills to solve complex or ‘wicked problems’, a term coined by Horst Rittel during the 1960s. Rittel differentiated between what he termed ‘tame problems’ and ‘wicked problems’ where ‘tame problems’ are simple or trivial problems and in contrast, ‘wicked problems’ are characterised by complex, real-world problems and do not lend themselves to simple solutions. Since design problems are largely ill-defined and based in the real-world, they are generally deemed as ‘wicked problems’ (Buchanan 1992).

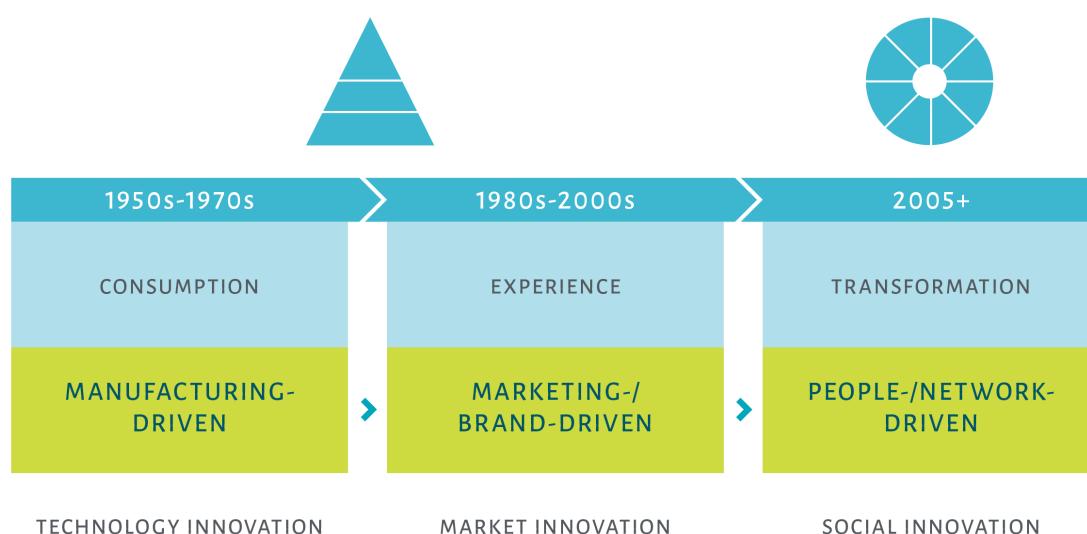


Figure 1: From a pyramid model to a pancake model of society and organisations (adapted from Green 2014).

The pervasive and increasingly influential role of design in contemporary culture implies new roles for designers. When reviewing design and business literature, it becomes evident that design is being adopted as a strategic competence, and the literature suggests that designers are increasingly playing a leadership role (Adler 2011; Martin 2009; Owen 2005, 2007). This sentiment is affirmed by Nelson and Stolterman (2012:5) who articulate that

The process of design is always the most effective and efficient means of getting organizations and individuals to new places. Design is therefore about leadership – and leadership is therefore an essential element of design culture. Leadership today demands action and the ability to act, based on an overwhelming amount of insufficient information within restrictive limits of resources and time. These demands cannot be met primarily from the traditions of science, art, or pragmatic technology. These demands require leaders to imagine, implement and communicate adequate responses that are sustainable – in all their implications ... We believe that leaders and designers are often one and the same, and that it is important for leaders to recognize that their challenge is that of a designer – to determine direction and destination via the design tradition.

Despite design being promoted more broadly by people such as Nelson and Stolterman (2012), design thinking has come under scrutiny and has faced criticism as being a passing fad. The very proponents of design thinking, such as the influential Bruce Nussbaum (2011), have denounced the term. Nonetheless, it could merely be a case of semantics because Nussbaum (2013) has proceeded to advocate the idea of a creative quotient and subsequently creative intelligence, in his eponymous book. The similarity between creative intelligence and design thinking remains striking; both focus on framing and solving complex problems in new ways. Contrary to popular belief, however, design thinking is not something that was developed and subsequently promoted by David Kelly, founder of IDEO.

Design thinking has a long history, which is evidenced in the history on design methods (Bousbaci 2008; Cross 2006, 2011; Lawson 2006). The literature on design methods refers to seminal authors such as Herbert Simon (1969) as well as Horst Rittel and Melvin Webber (1984) who consider the relationship between design and complex problems. From the literature it is clear that the term ‘design thinking’ essentially denotes the practice of professional designers. This practice is closely related to the cognitive aspects/philosophical underpinnings of design, which Nigel Cross (2006, 2011) refers to specifically as “designerly ways of knowing and doing”. Furthermore, in the words of the design and cultural theorist, Tony Fry (2011:75), “[d]esigning has to be grasped and made present as an activity that extends well beyond the rubric of designers”. This viewpoint of design as being an inclusive activity has impacted on the understanding of design not only as a commercial enterprise, but also as a social enterprise, which underpins this thesis. Therefore, designers’

leadership positions are not restricted to business contexts, but also extend more notably to social contexts.

The promotion of socially responsible design is not a recent occurrence, despite its key proponents sitting “at the fringes of design communities and industry for many decades” (Tan 2012:2-3). The idea of design for social change can be traced back to designers such as William Morris (1834-1896) and Buckminster Fuller (1895-1983) (Lees-Maffei 2012:90). Through their work, these designers advocated design reform as a means of social change. The fact that they hailed from different design disciplines shows that the strong moral viewpoint that they adopted was not hindered by disciplinary distinctions. It should be acknowledged that the concept of social change is quite broad, but for the purposes of this research, the clarification of the term borrows from the meanings that are found in social work and sociology that denote that social change “refers to modifications in the social behaviour patterns or relations of people, communities or society” (Smith 1973, in Palafox 2010:28), with a view towards beneficial results.

During the 1970s, globalisation began to have a profound impact on societies and began to shift people’s perceptions and behaviour at an unprecedented scale (Fuad-Luke 2009:2954). Consequently, the issue of sustainability started gaining prominence, and another significant call for socially responsible design emerged with Victor Papanek’s (1974) seminal book, *Design for the real world: Human ecology and social change* in which he initiated a critical analysis of the contribution design makes to environmental and social problems. Although the main narrative of Papanek’s work is understood as being a critique of consumer culture and a shift towards green design, Alison Clarke (2013) has more recently presented an alternate narrative. She argues that Papanek’s workshops in Finland during the 1960s were an influence on his work and as such, it was aligned with the emergence of participatory design activism in Scandinavia instead of the ecological and green design discourse emanating in North America at the time (Clarke 2013). Irrespective of the context that informed his work, Papanek (1974) encouraged designers to be socially responsible and therefore to produce work that is acceptable in terms of social utility and value. This call for socially responsible design once again gained impetus from the 1990s onwards, especially because of the widening conception of design that no longer concentrated only on the tangible outcomes of the design process, but extended to intangible outcomes such as systems and even experiences. Buchanan’s

(1992, 1998) proposal of the four orders of design (Table 1) was therefore seminal because it clearly highlighted the changing view of design, especially in the service of social change.³

	COMMUNICATION SIGNS AND WORDS	CONSTRUCTION THINGS	STRATEGIC PLANNING ACTION	SYSTEMIC INTEGRATION THOUGHT
Inventing	Signs, symbols and images			
Judging		Physical objects		
Deciding			Activities, services and processes	
Evaluating				Systems, environments, ideas and values

Table 1: The four orders of design (Buchanan 1998:13).

The ongoing argument for a wider practice of design and design thinking for social change is closely linked to the etymology of the word design. Design can be classified as both a verb and a noun (Lawson 2006:4), and as such can be regarded as an activity/process or an outcome of that process. Although there is no single definition of design, Nelson and Stolterman's (2012:2) belief that "human intention, [is] made visible and concrete through the instrumentality of design" is significant in highlighting the recurring idea that design is a goal-oriented process (Friedman 2003:508). Herbert Simon's (1969:129) quote that "[e]veryone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones" is still relevant, and eloquently denotes the transformative potential of design. This transformative potential of design for purposes of social change is evidenced by the large scope of design areas and approaches that are highlighted in the following list by Tan (2012:3). Even though these areas may differ in their procedural characteristics, each of them is inextricably linked by their underpinning intention to work towards the greater good.

- Service Design or Design for Services
- Design for Social Innovation
- Social Design
- Co-Design
- Transformative Design
- Design for Public Services
- Experience Based Design
- Creative Communities
- Design for Development
- Sustainable Design
- Design Activism

³ Buchanan's work is largely informed by pragmatic philosophy, particularly the work of John Dewey, and therefore his theorisation of the four orders of design had real implications for design practice.

- Design Thinking
- Public Service Design.

The expanding and evolving practice of design and by definition, its intention to facilitate meaningful change, not only influences the outcomes of the design process, but also the roles of designers in the ever-changing and complex world that Green (2014) refers to. To return to Green's (2014:[sp] keynote address mentioned previously, she posed a valid question in this regard: "How do designers make this [new] emerging world more tangible and accessible?" In response to her own question, she offered four ways in which designers may play a role towards addressing change:

- Designers create visions, they stimulate, inspire and educate.
- Designers facilitate the co-creation of projects and practices, designing with active communities.
- Designers' practice is supported by research in the field.
- Designers give people tools and the skills to solve problems.

Overall, the sentiment that emerged from Green's (2014) keynote address is that owing to their abductive modes of reasoning, designers display an increased sense of agency. In Ezio Manzini's (2014) words, this viewpoint would relate to designers having the potential for "making things happen". Reflecting on social innovation and design, Manzini (2014) also reflects on a range of design activities that have come to the fore for designers; accordingly, he notes four contemporary roles for designers:

- Facilitators: to support ongoing design initiatives
- Triggers: to initiate social dialogue
- Co-design team members: working together with end-users (in different capacities)
- Design activists: launching socially meaningful design initiatives.

Both Green's (2014) and Manzini's (2014, 2015) arguments indicate that designers do not operate in isolation or design for others, but work with end users and communities to tackle problems and initiate change in participatory ways. What this implies is that designers often find themselves as part of multidisciplinary teams who design products and services that focus specifically on the needs of the end user. In turn, traditional designer–client relationships, such as those identified by Nelson and Stolterman (2012:48) that are inherently dichotomous in nature, are being redefined by these developments to include new co-design practices and processes. These include user-centred design and participatory design, to name a couple, which see designers and their so-called clients working together and adopting design thinking for social change.

One example of the changing view of design for social change is how the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum's exhibition, *Design for the other 90%* (2007) evolved and

manifested in a follow-up exhibition called *Design with the other 90%: Cities* in 2011. Here, the emphasis shifted from designing product interventions for people from some of the world's poorest global communities to designing *with* them within the context of the cities in which they reside. This topic of designing with others enjoys continued discussion and debate, as is evidenced by the theme of the Cumulus conference in Johannesburg in September 2014, namely *Design with the other 90%: Changing the world by design*. Despite the ongoing efforts to promote and create awareness of the role of design for social change, many of the participatory design practices are in keeping with the idea of designers being ethical and socially responsible within the confines of a global, consumer culture. This stance resonates with sentiments put forward in numerous articles in Steven Heller and Veronique Vienne's (2003) book, *Citizen designer: Perspectives on design responsibility*.

Although *Citizen designer* calls into question the idea of citizenship, it is largely restricted to the agency of communication designers as citizens, and does not necessarily extend to giving end users of their work a sense of citizenship and agency beyond their engagement within the confines of the design project. This practice can be aligned more generally with contemporary participatory design, which focuses on engaging with end users to provide them with design infrastructure (Binder, De Michelis, Ehn, Jacucci, Linde & Wagner 2011; Knutz, Markussen, Thomsen & Ammentorp 2014). No doubt, there is merit in providing design infrastructure for individuals and their communities, but the word 'provide' can be questioned in that it alludes primarily to design assistance rather than agency and activism via design. For example, this idea of assistance underpins the numerous examples of design innovations that form part of the *Design with the other 90%: Cities* exhibition; these innovations address issues relating to both the natural and the built environment, as well as healthcare and education.

When referring to the case studies from the *Design with the other 90%: Cities* exhibition, Judith Rodin (in Smith 2011:7), states that "helping communities find their own solutions brings not only innovation, but ultimately builds resilience" and "[g]rassroots advances are both indicators and generators of community empowerment". Once again, the rhetoric of assistance is evident in Rodin's statement in that she refers to "community empowerment". The word 'empowerment' denotes the act of giving power. Similarly, The World Bank (2011) defines empowerment as follows:

Empowerment is the process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. Central to this process are actions which both build individual and collective assets, and improve the efficiency and fairness of the organizational and institutional context which govern the use of these assets.

When considering the role of designers who “do good design” (Berman 2008) against this definition of empowerment it is clear that what social designers are doing is in fact empowering poor and/or marginalised people by rendering a professional service to them in order to build their assets and infrastructure. However, this practice is often within organisational and institutional contexts and therefore social design projects, including those in pursuit of democracy, are often state-commissioned and operate within the status quo. Practical examples of this include the design of tools for governments to ensure the efficient running of regulatory systems, such as tax systems (Golsby-Smith 1996) and electoral systems, including ballots (Lausen 2007).

Cynthia Weber (2010), when exploring the relationship between design and citizenship, is very critical of design prototypes for citizenship that have been state-commissioned because she claims that they undervalue citizenship. Weber (2010) is also sceptical of empowerment, and to support her argument she quotes Heatherwick (2004:53) who believes that “[e]mpowerment’ is a deeply problematic concept: in the strictest sense, power is taken not given”. Accordingly, many social innovation projects are design-led processes that maintain a top-down or bottom-up approach but are seldom of the hybrid type that Manzini (2014) discusses. The top-down and bottom-up approaches versus the hybrid approach could easily be visualised using Green’s (2014) visual metaphors of pyramids and pancakes respectively.

Hybrid social innovation, according to Manzini (2014:63) is “when bottom-up and top-down meet”. According to him, hybrid processes involve complex interactions between the general population (bottom-up) and institutions and organisations (top-down) with the intention of a much larger scale of social change. Owing to its nature, hybrid social innovation therefore seems to have the potential to redistribute power and more importantly, mobilise a sense of agency amongst all the participants. Therefore, I argue that hybrid social innovation processes are more inclusive and democratic in that they dispel the stance that “citizens cannot achieve this vision [of change] on their own” (McCarty, in Smith 2011:8). Furthermore, I extend this argument by adding that from the numerous roles that designers adopt to address social change, it is the fourth role identified by Manzini, namely design activists, who seem to hold significant potential for leadership in communities by not just empowering citizens through design, but also emancipating them via design.

The popularity and promotion of contemporary design thinking speaks to the idea of emancipation because all citizens are free to exercise design thinking in their own capacity as a problem-solving methodology. Accordingly, my research acknowledges Tony Fry’s (2011) dualism of professional and

non-professional design. This dualism supports the move of my research away from design as a verb, an exclusive activity and the view of designers as service providers, and brings design into the spotlight as a skill that can be adopted and nurtured as a way of thinking or mode of reasoning by all citizens. This stance also recalls the notion of “practical competence” that Stegall (2006:60) mentions in his argument for designers to activate an ecological philosophy, a “philosophy of purpose” in society, whereby “[p]eople act as their own designers when they are able to recognize needs in their lives or their communities, and develop solutions to meet those needs”.

Characterised by an abductive mode of reasoning (Dorst 2011; Kolko 2010), design thinking does away with risk-averse behaviour, asks the question ‘what if’, and thereby encourages imagination of future scenarios. In keeping with the idea of imagining future scenarios, John Wood (2007:4) argues that individual and social aspirations can only be realised if citizens begin to imagine and create alternative visions for the future. Citizens are generally critical of their current circumstances, but they seldom articulate or consider what they want in more direct ways; hence, Wood (2007) places value in collective and creative optimism for the democratic transformation of societies. In this regard, it is the transformative potential of design thinking to tackle wicked social problems that motivated and informed my research project. From the onset, the research was underpinned by the view that design activists act as change agents or design thinking enablers in a social context to get citizens not only to imagine a better world for themselves, but also to act on it via a design thinking mindset. Hence, the research is not only aligned with Fry’s dualism of design but also aligns with Fuad-Luke’s (2009) viewpoint that anyone can be a design activist. This viewpoint therefore supported the research project to open up the discourse about design citizenship beyond the activities of designers. Accordingly, Fry’s (2011) general sentiment that design is political on the basis of a common cause rather than a political ideology further motivated the alignment of my research with the concept of design activism.

For purposes of this research, grounded theory has been selected as a suitable methodology because it is a qualitative research approach that is “grounded in everyday life practice” (Ülkebaş 2014:1). This emphasis on engaging with the real-world is in keeping with contemporary design discourse where designers’ roles are no longer restricted to being objective entities that are called on at the end of a process to “put a beautiful wrapper around the idea” (Brown 2008:86) but instead, as subjective key players who are involved at the front end of social innovation. Furthermore, grounded theory is characterised as an ideographic methodology (Johansson & Woodilla 2008:5), meaning that the social world can only be understood by obtaining first-hand

knowledge of the subject under investigation. Considering the pragmatic nature of design activism, it follows that the researcher needs to have a comprehensive and immediate understanding of its practice and implications. The intended outcome of the research is to explore a way to generate a substantive theory of design citizenship; a substantive theory is defined as “a description and abstraction of what goes on in a particular kind of social setting” (De Vos 2002:274). Furthermore, with grounded theory the intention is not to test a hypothesis but rather it aims to develop new concepts and theoretical ideas through an analysis of empirical data. As such, the gap in literature on design citizenship further substantiates and informs the choice of grounded theory as the appropriate research methodology.

1.3 Initial literature review and conceptual framework

Owing to the inductive nature of grounded theory, the use of a literature review is contested in different grounded theory approaches and its polarised positions have been “the subject of vigorous debate” (Dunne 2011:113). Glaser and Strauss (1967), the first proponents of grounded theory, initially argued that no pre-research literature review should be completed because it may lead to preconceived ideas about the research by hindering categories to emerge naturally from the data. According to Dunne (2011:115), the argument against a literature review at the onset of a study is both ideological and pragmatic and reflects the ontology and emergent procedural nature of the first school of grounded theory as a qualitative research methodology.⁴ Subsequently, however, the debate has shifted. For example, Strauss and Corbin proposed the use of a preliminary literature review and, more recently, authors such as Anfara and Mertz (2006) and Charmaz (2014a) contend that research cannot be conducted without prior knowledge of the field. Their views resonate with McGhee, Marland and Atkinson (2007), who argue that a literature review provides a rationale for the study by identifying the paucity of knowledge about a topic, helps a researcher to be mindful of conceptual and methodological drawbacks, as well as facilitating theoretical sensitivity during the research process. Furthermore, doctoral research funding bodies and universities also require an initial literature review and a conceptual framework to guide and motivate the proposed studies.

In keeping with the theoretical arguments for a literature review as well as the pragmatic, pedagogic requirements, it was necessary to complete this initial literature review to provide a context or rationale for the conceptual framework that informed the research; Iain McMenamin (2006:134) refers to this contextualisation as the “geography of a subject”. Nonetheless, it is important to note

⁴ The emergence and development of the four major variants or schools of grounded theory are discussed in more detail in Chapter Two.

that the following literature review about design activism that was initiated for the research proposal is by no means exhaustive; the reason for this was to avoid imposing preconceived ideas on the research as well as to reflect the essence of grounded theory, that is, not to test a hypothesis but rather to ground a substantive theory in empirical data. In accordance with a grounded theory methodology, there is generally a delay of the literature review until the categories emerge from the data and are formed through the iterative research process. Thereafter, the categories are discussed in relation to the following literature on design activism and citizenship as a means to position the new theory on design citizenship within contemporary design discourse. To this end, the grounded theory is discussed in detail in Chapter Five with a view towards extending and/or challenging extant concepts.

As noted previously, design activism is the lens through which the research explores the notion of design citizenship and therefore, the units of analysis for the study are instances of design activism, namely design interventions. Hence, the following literature review about design activism and the nature of design interventions serves as a guide to consider the current conception of design activism. The literature review outlines the related theoretical viewpoints by the following seminal authors contributing to contemporary design activism discourse: Alastair Fuad-Luke, Ann Thorpe, Thomas Markussen and Guy Julier. More importantly, the review of contemporary design activism identifies an area of study that has not been explored previously, and consequently assists in formulating and justifying the research question for this study. The literature review also informs the grounded theory approach as the chosen methodology for the research owing to the lack of any significant research about design citizenship. Consequently, the following section on design activism precedes the introduction to the notion of design citizenship.

1.3.1 Design activism

The idea of design activism is inextricably linked to the history of design. Throughout history, there are numerous examples of designers being responsive to changes in society and the way their voices have been raised particularly “during periods of rapid social change or unrest” (Fuad-Luke 2013:467). Although not restricted to these two disciplines, graphic design and architecture are two traditional design disciplines that have a history of reform and thereby, also activism. As mentioned previously, design reform advocated by William Morris during the British Arts and Crafts Movement and the contribution of Buckminster Fuller early in the twentieth century are significant milestones of design reform. Subsequently, the anti-design movements in Italy during the 1960s and 1970s, the publication of Ken Garland’s *First things first manifesto* in 1964 and the work of Adbusters in the

1990s also highlight the reaction from the design discipline to particular circumstances. In retrospect, the design reform advocated in these historic examples had a top-down approach and aligned with new and emerging markets rather than being democratic in nature. In contrast, contemporary design activism has shifted to become more of a grass-roots activity, with a bottom-up and often a hybrid approach. Notwithstanding the fact that the initiators of design activism may have changed, the interventions by design activists still address issues faced by society at large. This viewpoint is supported by Guy Julier (2011:1), who indicates that design activism has “re-emerged in alliance with a number of global political issues including responses to Peak Oil, climate change, food shortages, social justice, the digital divide, demographic change, military conflict, sexual inequality and orientation, financialisation and global economic recession”.

Furthermore, it is not only the initiators of design activism who have become more varied but the approach of design activism has changed too. Design activism today is not about resistance or reform per se. It has seen a shift from “reacting to given circumstances” to “proposing a materially different public world” (Julier 2013a:147). The idea of design activism proposing a “different public world” aligns extremely well with Herbert Simon’s (1969:129) definition of design, which is worth repeating here: “[e]veryone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones”. Furthermore, the focus on preferred situations is encapsulated succinctly in Fuad-Luke’s (2009) definition of design activism. This definition is adopted as the working definition for my research because it clearly aligns the intention of design with design thinking and more specifically, design activism.

Fuad-Luke (2009:786) defines design activism as “design thinking, imagination and practice applied knowingly or unknowingly to create a counter-narrative aimed at generating and balancing positive, social, institutional, environmental and/or economic change”. The focus on imagination and counter-narratives by design activists in this definition speaks to a redirection of the status quo. For this reason, the definition also brings the conception of design activism more in line with the hybrid processes of social innovation and activism, and suggests that they are more inclusive and even more democratic in nature.

Although some of the literature on design activism suggests that it is most prevalent within an urban context (Fuad-Luke 2009; Julier 2011), the aforementioned viewpoint that contemporary design thinking traverses design disciplines sees design as a field of political action on a much broader, societal level (Fry 2011). However, at the same time that design is acknowledged as a field of

political action, it should be reiterated that “[t]he design [activism] act is not a boycott, strike, protest, demonstration, or some other political act; instead it lends its power of resistance by being precisely a *designerly* way of intervening in people’s lives” (Markussen 2013:38). Here, a “designerly way” refers to the adoption of a design thinking mindset and the quote explains clearly that design straddles aesthetic and socio-political concerns.

Considering design activism’s wide reach over time, Fuad-Luke (2009:33) questions the impact of designers’ work on culture. He questions the intention of designers to affect change on culture in general or more specifically to change the culture of design. He refers to Guy Julier’s (2008) distinction between design culture and Design Culture where design culture is an object of study and Design Culture denotes the study of an academic discipline. For purposes of my research, both of Julier’s terms are relevant. Firstly, design activism is linked to the creation of a new design culture with the idea that the design culture is “an agency of reform (or even revolution) directing design towards greater and more direct social and environmental benefit” (Fuad-Luke 2009:33). To this end, design activism can create a design culture that initiates and mobilises new values for social change. Akimenko (2013), for example, discusses the role of design interventions in changing society’s values and frames her discussion within the context of sustainability. Secondly, owing to the nature of the research topic, it aims to contribute to Design Culture by means of exploring the relationship between design activism and design citizenship within the context of design culture and as a result, introducing a theory on design citizenship within Design Culture studies. To date, Design Culture studies are carried out predominantly from a Eurocentric and North American vantage point so the South African context of the research was to bring a new perspective to the academic discipline by introducing “theory from the south”. In accordance with Comaroff and Comaroff’s (2011) anthropological stance of taking Africa as the point of departure to question core and periphery dualisms, my research addresses South African design activism and citizenship in its own right and not merely as a derivative or copy of practices in the global North.

Within contemporary design discourse, design activism has seen an increased focus in attention and according to Fuad-Luke (2013:467), “it has gained momentum over the past decade”, leading to many conferences and publications. Fuad-Luke’s book, *Design activism: Beautiful strangeness for a sustainable world*, published in 2009 attests to the dedicated interest in the topic. Many conferences have directly adopted the theme of design activism. These include *Changing the Change* in Turin (2008), *NORDES* in Helsinki in 2011, *What Design Can Do* in Amsterdam (2011), and *Cumulus* in Aspen (2011). Also of particular significance is the *Design Activism and Social Change* conference

held in Barcelona in 2011, which brought together “one hundred papers from thirty-four countries” (Julier 2013a:148), and served as a good indicator of the topicality of the subject, and also highlighted different perspectives and viewpoints on the theory and practice of design activism. From a historical perspective, Grace Lees-Maffei (2012:90) is of the opinion that it served as a valuable platform to consider the distinction between design reform and design activism.⁵

The widespread literature on design activism signifies that it is not easy to contain the theory and practice of design activism owing to the fact that it is influenced by a wide range of issues and spans different design disciplines. Therefore, it is also not surprising that there is theoretical variance amongst the seminal authors. Perhaps the differing viewpoints indicate that the topic is enjoying healthy attention and debate, and also paves the way for the grounded theory research to build on the developing knowledge in the field. The three seminal authors whose theoretical frameworks are mapped in Table 2 include Alastair Fuad-Luke, Ann Thorpe and Thomas Markussen. In addition, Guy Julier and Henk Oosterling are also consulted.

Ann Thorpe approaches the topic of design activism from a sociological perspective. She looks at the commonalities between design activism and social practices and argues that sociology offers design activism a typology that comprises conceptual tools for action. Her typology matches five different types of activist work with related forms of design work that are drawn from conventional activism: organising, services, advocacy, mobilisation and solidarity (Thorpe 2011:9). Also informed by the nature of conventional activism, Thorpe (2011:6) presents the following basic criteria to define acts/instances of design activism:

- It publicly reveals or frames a problem or challenging issue.
- It makes a contentious claim for change (it calls for change) based on that problem or issue.
- It works on behalf of a neglected, excluded or disadvantaged group.
- It disrupts routine practices, or systems of authority, which gives it the characteristic of being unconventional or unorthodox—outside traditional channels of change.

Thorpe’s concerns are theoretical rather than pragmatic and it is this approach that has garnered criticism from both Fuad-Luke and Markussen. In particular, Markussen (2013:40) is critical of the fact that Thorpe does not consider design activism from an urban perspective. Markussen’s criticism of Thorpe’s framework embraces the fact he considers sociology as an external theory that cannot

⁵ The conference also facilitated continued debate by way of a publication. The seminal design journal, *Design and Culture*, ran a special issue on design activism, guest-edited by Guy Julier, in 2013, which was derived from the papers presented at the conference in Barcelona. As mentioned previously, Julier (2013b) is one of the leading proponents of design culture and together with his colleague, Anders Munch, is perhaps the originator of the term ‘design citizenship’.

be sufficiently applied to something like design, which has its own nuances in theory and practice. To me, what may need further investigation is the third criterion put forward by Thorpe, namely working “on behalf” of others. Here, the voice of the designer should not be above the voice of the people and the design activist must not merely be a self-appointed spokesperson.

Unlike Thorpe, Fuad-Luke comes to the topic from a design perspective and offers a very broad treatment of design activism. According to Oosterling (2011:3), Fuad-Luke “adds a third structural feature to design activism” by including thinking at the intersection of art (imagination) and politics (practice). This feature widens Fuad-Luke’s notion of design activism beyond the contribution of designers and he proposes that with a design thinking mindset, anyone can be an activist and imagine alternate or counter-narratives. The focus on design thinking as a design process rather than a design outcome is echoed by Julier (2013a:147), who contends that “the process by which this [alternate] future is made is more important than the need to know what the future might include”. In keeping with the value of the design process for imagining alternate futures, Fuad-Luke (2009:20) asserts that design activism has the capacity not only to change the social situation, but the activist too. In this sense, design activism allows not only for reflectivity, but reflexivity as well.

Fuad-Luke frames his argument within a sustainability agenda and presents a framework of five capitals: natural, human, social, manufactured and financial. According to Fuad-Luke (2009), these five capitals are the ‘spaces’ in which activism exerts a pragmatic and ideological influence. Moreover, he considers the notion of disruption that relates to the questioning of existing paradigms and is evident in his definition of the term that proposes the use of counter-narratives. It is this notion of disruption that is used by Markussen to take the discussion on a suitable framework for design activism forward.

To Markussen (2013), activism is regarded as a new way of looking, and therefore he considers design activism as an aesthetic experience that he presents in a conceptual framework where he refers to “the disruptive aesthetics of design activism”. Markussen draws on Jacques Rancière’s (2004) notion of the distribution of the sensible, which Rancière advocates in his seminal publication, *The politics of aesthetics*. This focus on a disruptive aesthetic experience moves Markussen’s (2013:39) attention away from the history of design activism and brings it closer to the act of design itself. His approach is therefore more pragmatic because it focuses on concepts for action. This stance is apparent in his list of design activism practices such as walking and dwelling, to name a couple. As a result, Markussen situates his discussion of design activism within the context of

the public sphere and the urban environment. This viewpoint is in line with Oosterling's belief that the medium of design activism is public space. Nevertheless, Markussen is wary of the fact that design activism must not become entangled with the promotion of the creative economy and move away from its initial conception.

Although the approaches to design activism range from theoretical to the more pragmatic and even philosophical, what they all share is that they see design activism as a socio-political practice. Furthermore, there is the realisation that the act of design activism is not restricted to professional designers and makes its practice more accessible to all. This viewpoint is supported by Oosterling's (2011) argument that design activists should do away with traditional authorship practices, a kind of de-signaturing, and "promote the self-reflective consciousness of being in-between, of being a medium yourself, of being embedded in relations". This sentiment evokes the South African spirit of *ubuntu*; *ubuntu* is a humanist philosophy that asserts that "a person is a person through other persons" (Winschiers-Theophilus, Bidwell & Blake 2012:89). Similarly, the philosophy of *ubuntu* evokes IDEO's sentiment that "all of us are better than one of us" (Brown 2009). Therefore, design activism should be accepted as a collective and shared endeavour undertaken in the hopes of social change and ultimately, a sustainable "design futuring" (Fry 2008).

	ANN THORPE (2011)	ALASTAIR FUAD-LUKE (2009)	THOMAS MARKUSSEN (2013)
Perspective	Theoretical	Pragmatic	Philosophical Pragmatic
Focus/ Influence	Sociology (commonalities between design activism and social practices)	Design (with a sustainability agenda)	Aesthetics (and its intersection with politics)
Characteristics of design activism	Framing of problems through resistance	Design thinking and imagination	A designerly way of intervening in people's lives
Purpose of design activism	Protest; claim for social change	Counter narratives; revised notion of beauty ("beautiful strangeness")	Reflexivity; behaviour change; urban experience
Design activism categories/ forms/ spaces	Demonstration artifact, act of communication, conventional actions, service artifact, events, protest artifact	Natural capital, human capital, social capital, manufactured capital, financial capital	Walking, dwelling, playing, gardening, recycling
Approach	On behalf of an excluded or neglected group	Communal interest	Communal interest

Table 2: An overview of different conceptualisations of design activism found in contemporary design discourse (inspired by Kimbell 2011:297).

1.3.2 Design citizenship

With regard to the idea of design citizenship, it is necessary to first understand the two terms independently before considering them as a unit. The nature of design and specifically design activism has been covered earlier in this chapter, so the following is a brief discussion of citizenship, and by extension civic engagement, within a contemporary political perspective.

A citizen is considered as a participatory member of a political community, and citizenship essentially refers to the legal status of that person “defined by civil, political and social rights” (Leydet 2014). These terms are universal despite citizenship being synonymously referred to by the term ‘nationality’. However, with regard to civic engagement, there is not a single or definitive conceptualisation of the term. Like design, ‘civic engagement’ is a broad term and at its core is citizens’ participation in their community with a view of improvement on both an individual and collective level. The term ‘citizen’ is inclusive and refers to all age groups, but often research about civic engagement aims to shed light on a particular group of citizens and their behaviour in the civic realm. Implications for national policies are often at the heart of such civic engagement research. Sherrod, Toney-Purta and Flanagan (2010:2) acknowledge the broad scope of civic engagement by stating that civic engagement is considered from a number of perspectives ranging from political science to development psychology and as such, can be regarded as being interdisciplinary. The broad focus of civic engagement has resulted in a much broader conceptualisation of the term ‘citizenship’, where there is recognition that citizenship and civic engagement are no longer restricted to the practice of voting. According to Jamieson, Pendlebury and Bray (2011:70),

contemporary theory defines citizenship even more broadly – as both a legal status (with accompanying rights and duties) and as an active participatory practice that recognises and shapes people’s membership in a society. Within this broader definition, citizenship has four ‘building blocks’: membership, rights, responsibilities, and equality of status.

Owing to its broader conception, civic engagement therefore goes beyond electoral politics and covers a wider spectrum of participation and dialogue. This is not to say that civic engagement and civic responsibility were previously independent of dialogue. The subject of dialogue and its relationship to social action, with a focus specifically on education, dates back to Book VII of Plato’s *Republic* (2013), and has subsequently been considered by pragmatic American philosopher John Dewey (1938) and by Brazilian educator and philosopher, Paulo Freire (1970). Nevertheless, in a contemporary context, dialogue or the notion of having one’s voice heard (Haste & Hogan 2006:480) is regarded as being as credible as voting as a form of civic engagement. Following from this viewpoint, the related act of civic activism is generally initiated by a response to a particular issue,

be it political, social or environmental. As a result, civic engagement is often coupled with a focus on single-issues. This stance recalls the nature and practice of design activism that does not stem from an explicit interest in political activism, but more so out of a concern for social justice causes. This is particularly true within a South African context where there are current issues such as education and healthcare at both a local and a national level. When discussing the relationship between design and citizenship, Weber (2010:9) also notes that “design mediates the very same fundamental political questions as does citizenship”. These similarities indicate that both design activism and civic engagement encourage people to act upon their current situations in order to transform them into better ones, and they both favour a participatory outlook where people are encouraged to be active and engaged citizens rather than passive ones.

Julier (2013b) also privileges the idea of engaged citizens while trying to explore the nature of design citizenship.⁶ Julier (2013b) acknowledges that design has been inextricably linked to civic action by recognising some examples of how "design is mobilized to generate certain notions of civic life". The first example is that of regeneration and the role that design plays in designing civic engagement in the public sphere; town squares are one such example. Secondly, Julier (2013b) refers to the way that design brings together citizens through like-minded actions and interests; to this end, he uses brand communities and online platforms as an example where people subscribe to a particular group. Thirdly, the idea of democracy and participatory governance is raised. Here, the emphasis is on citizens being involved in decision making. Julier (2013b) advances the discussion beyond these three contexts, which relate closely to conceptions of public space, and offers that the concerns of design citizenship can be extended much more widely. Julier's (2013b) sentiment that design citizenship is "a particular kind of practice" is informed by a variety of perspectives on the topic from different disciplinary vantage points such as architecture, fashion and even design policy. Therefore, he proposes that design citizenship is a socio-material engagement with the world that links the private and the public (Julier 2013b). This suggests that citizens operate on an individual and a collective level, and thereby implies the centrality of education and experience in this context.

Some of the questions raised as part of the design citizenship conversation include issues of accessibility and inclusivity. These questions are considered in relationship to topical ideas on the creative class, the creative city and even the notion of a smart city. There is a great deal of criticism about Richard Florida's (2002) notion of the creative class as an exclusive group or class. However,

⁶ This exploration formed part of The Kolding Design Culture Seminars held at the Kolding School of Design at the University of Southern Denmark; design citizenship was a dedicated theme of one of the seminars in 2013.

Charles Landry's (2000) idea of the creative city is seen as being more inclusive and is the one supported by Markussen (2013). Landry's concept also focuses on urban governance and therefore the idea of design as a democratic tool. Eeva Berglund (in Julier 2013b), speaking about Helsinki's designation as the World Design Capital in 2012, raises the point that for citizens to engage in design they need to be design-literate. Therefore, although such city designations such as the World Design Capital may be contested, they may encourage a broader awareness, interest and engagement with design and through design by citizens (Cassim 2013).

The idea of do-it-yourself (DIY) citizenship has also gained interest recently, specifically with regard to the rise of social media. Its focus on critical making and its "socially interventionist" ethos may have relevance to a study on design citizenship (Ratto & Boler 2014:7). In the introduction to their book, *DIY Citizenship: Critical making and social media*, Ratto and Boler (2014:15) observe that there is no authoritative definition of the term 'DIY citizenship', but rather, there are a multitude of questions that can be addressed. I adopted the same broad outlook for this grounded theory doctoral study. Therefore, using Ratto and Boler's questions on DIY citizenship as a point of departure, this study explores the following questions:

- Who is the design citizen?
- What are the tools and practices of design citizenship?
- Where and what are the spaces and communities of design citizenship?
- Is design citizenship emancipatory?

1.4 Research question

The review of literature on design culture, and more specifically design activism, reveals a gap in the area of design citizenship. Although reference is made in design discourse to the inextricable link between design and the political as well as the role of design in addressing social change, in citizenship, the link is often on design as an activity commissioned by the state to promote citizenship (Weber 2010). Design and citizenship are viewed interdependently, but there is very little to no focus on the combination of the two terms. Julier (2013b) and Anders Munch (in Julier 2013b) have initiated the use of the term 'design citizenship'; however, there is a lack of theoretical development on the idea itself. Therefore, following closely from their call for further research on the topic, the aim of my study is to explore the notion of design citizenship through the lens of design activism. To this end, the main research question is formulated as follows: What is the relationship between design activism and citizenship? In turn, the primary research question leads

to the sub-question: How does/might design activism nurture a citizenship competence through 'designerly ways of knowing and doing'?

There is an inherent flexibility to grounded theory because it is an emergent method; therefore, the research questions are open-ended at the onset of the research. Charmaz (2014a:26) uses an apt metaphor in this regard when she states that "[s]imilar to a camera with many lenses, first you view a broad sweep of the landscape".

1.5 Research paradigm

Barbara L'Huillier (2011:16) defines a research paradigm "as an intellectual boundary that captures a researcher's ontological, epistemological and methodical assumptions". Owing to the disruptive nature of design activism (Markussen 2013), the philosophical position for this enquiry is positioned within the radical humanist paradigm, which forms part of Burrell and Morgan's (1979) paradigmatic framework/model for the social sciences. Creswell (1998) classifies research paradigms according to two types, namely qualitative or quantitative. In this regard, this study can be classified as being qualitative, but it uses Burrell and Morgan's (1979) framework as a point of departure.

Burrell and Morgan's framework or classification comprises four quadrants that are divided by two axes so that each quadrant is mutually exclusive (Figure 2). The horizontal axis presents the subjective (individualistic) and the objective (structural) endpoints of the continuum while the vertical axis presents the two approaches of the contribution of the research to society, namely social order (regulation) or social change (radical). The four paradigms, in a clock-wise direction from top right are categorised as follows: radical structuralist, functionalist, interpretivist and radical humanist.

As suggested previously, I am critical of the idea of empowerment through design (which connotes a hierarchy of power) and, consequently, acknowledge the focus on the idea of emancipation through the use of design thinking by designers and non-designers alike. The radical humanist paradigm is therefore relevant because as Burrell and Morgan (in Johansson & Woodilla 2008:6) note, "[t]his type of research is concerned with finding explanations for structural conflict, modes of domination and structural contradiction. It is concerned with man's emancipation from the structures that limit and stunt his potential for development". Like design activism, the radical humanist paradigm is concerned with improvements to a social situation in a way where individuals question the norm and generate alternatives or counter-narratives (Fuad-Luke 2009). This viewpoint favours

subjectivity and will allow me, as the researcher, to adopt a particular social stance towards meaningful change for purposes of interpreting the social phenomenon under study.

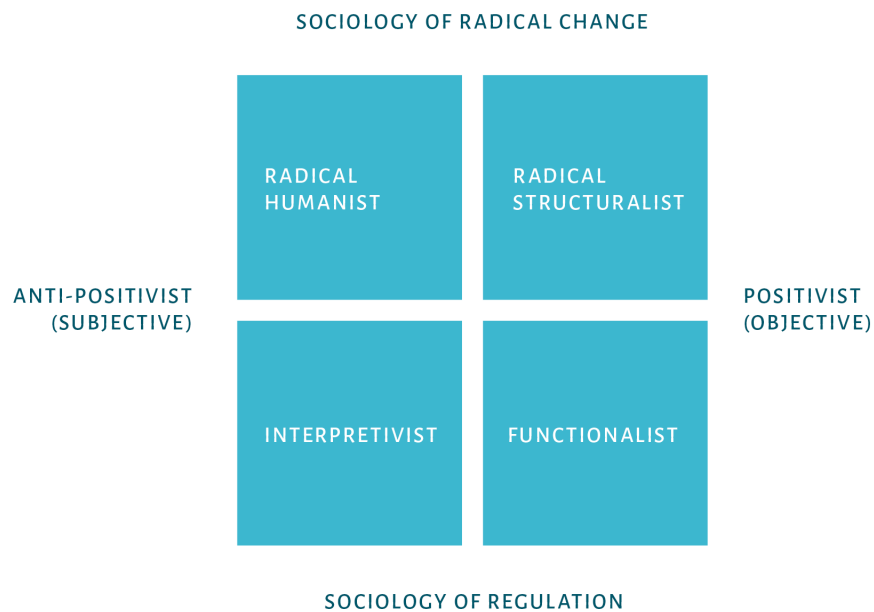


Figure 2: Four paradigms for the analysis of social theory (adapted from Burrell & Morgan 1979:22).

From an axiological perspective, my own stance as a design researcher is congruent with Donald Schön's (1983) idea of designers being reflective practitioners who engage in dialogue with their situations. My position as a researcher is also informed by design for social change and, more specifically, the principles of human-centred design, namely participation and responsibility; in other words, designing with people and not merely for them. This research alignment favours values such as social justice, human agency and freedom and ultimately well-being. The values associated with human-centred design and a reflective practitioner also have implications for the way in which the research participants are regarded; research participants are also seen as subjective entities who must be engaged to explore the phenomenon under question (L'Huillier 2011:20). This viewpoint also resonates with the constructivist grounded theory methodology, as discussed in Chapter Two. Accordingly, in the radical humanist paradigm, the research assumptions are focused on subjectivity and have radical change as the intention of the investigation.

Burrell and Morgan's framework, which was initiated within an organisational context for organisational analysis, is now being used widely for research within different disciplines. Johansson and Woodilla (2008), for example, working in design management, relate Burrell and Morgan's four paradigms to management and design theories before arriving at a schematic overlap of the two

disciplines. Nonetheless, their contribution to the discourse is very valuable to the paradigmatic decision of this study because, to my knowledge, there is no evidence of design being considered from this paradigmatic analysis. Moreover, Johansson and Woodilla's (2008) contribution is that they present a paradigmatic framework of design by placing design theories in the four quadrants. What they found is that traditional, and more functionalist design is situated in the bottom-right quadrant, whereas the increasingly new co-design approaches and contemporary design research can be mapped in the radical humanist quadrant. This finding also supports the choice of the radical humanist paradigm for this research.

1.6 Outline of the thesis

The inquiry into the phenomenon of design citizenship that is presented in this thesis comprises six chapters. Chapter One, which serves as the introduction to the study, provided the background and problem identification of the research. It situated the substantive area of the grounded theory study at the intersection of design activism and citizenship, before arriving at the research paradigm that is used to answer the main research question.

Chapter Two provides an introduction to the methodology for the research, namely grounded theory. Theoretical insights about the emergence and development of the different variants of grounded theory precede the detailed discussion regarding Charmaz's constructivist grounded theory as the chosen approach for the study. This discussion includes the principles of a constructivist grounded theory study, its potential for social justice research, as well as the criteria used to evaluate such a grounded theory study.

Following closely on Chapter Two, Chapter Three makes visible the research design of the study by unpacking the way in which the grounded theory methodology was applied in practice. More specifically, this chapter addresses the data-collection and data-analysis methods in accordance with the theory and philosophy of a constructivist grounded theory that was outlined in the previous chapter. It also considers the ethical implications of the study, and closes with the guiding principles of generating a substantive theory.

Chapter Four uses a narrative structure to present the findings of the research participants' experiences of design interventions. To this end, the conceptualisation of the phenomenon is guided by the people, places and processes of the phenomenon. In turn, the findings are organised around the key categories and concepts of each element that informs the emergence and realisation of the

phenomenon. Raw data are included to support the analytical findings in this chapter, and ultimately results in the theoretical framework of design citizenship.

Subsequently in Chapter Five, the substantive theory is interpreted in relation to extant theories. The interpretation of the substantive theory in this penultimate chapter draws on current discourse on design activism and citizenship, and results in a model of design citizenship.

Chapter Six concludes the research. It includes a reflection on the study's aim and objectives and how they are met throughout the research. Furthermore, it discusses the implications of this research for both design theory and practice. Lastly, Chapter Six provides recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY – GROUNDED THEORY

2.1 Introduction

This study was designed to explore the notion of design citizenship using the lens of design activism to explore design interventions in a South African context. Owing to the paucity of literature on design citizenship, I sought to generate a substantive theory using a grounded theory methodology that is informed by Burrell and Morgan's (1979) radical humanist frame of thinking (see Chapter One). Following from this research paradigm, Chapter Two positions and discusses grounded theory as the qualitative research methodology for this study.

An overview of the historical development of the methodology is useful to illustrate the differences in procedures of the varying grounded theory approaches and to locate them within qualitative research more generally. Denzin and Lincoln (2011:3) identify eight, historical moments of qualitative inquiry, as identified in Table 3. Each moment is situated in a specific historic period; they are social constructs that are influenced by the zeitgeist of the time. Birks and Mills (2015:6) observe that "[m]ethodologically, grounded theory has been influenced by researchers situated in the second, third, fourth and fifth of these eight moments". Accordingly, there are four variants or schools of grounded theory that direct current literature on the topic. Drawing on Denzin (2007), Clarke and Charmaz (2014:xxi) categorise the philosophical underpinnings of these four schools of grounded theory as follows: "Glaserian GT [grounded theory] as objectivist, the Strauss & Corbin version as systematic, the Charmaz version as constructivist and Clarke's as situationist".

TIMEFRAME	HISTORICAL MOMENT
1900–1950	Traditional
1950–1970	Modernist or 'Golden Age'
1970–1986	Blurred genres
1986–1990	The crisis of representation
1990–1995	Postmodernism
1995–2000	Postexperimental inquiry
2000–2010	The methodologically contested present
2010 onwards	The future

Table 3: Denzin and Lincoln's eight moments of qualitative inquiry
(adapted from Denzin & Lincoln 2011:3).

Even though there are philosophical and procedural differences in each of the major variants of grounded theory that are discussed chronologically in this chapter, there is consensus regarding the purpose of each approach, that is, the discovery of theory that is grounded in the data. Secondly, due consideration is given to the choice of Charmaz's constructivist school of grounded theory as the methodology for this study. To this end, the principles of constructivist grounded theory are given; the role of the researcher and the logic of constructivist grounded theory are also woven in this discussion. Lastly, the potential of constructivist grounded theory for social justice research is considered before arriving at the criteria for grounded theory studies for purposes of social justice inquiry.

2.2 The emergence and development of grounded theory

Grounded theory is a widely used qualitative research methodology that is used "to derive theories from an analysis of the patterns, themes, and common categories discovered among observational data" (Rubin & Babbie 2011:454). As a term, 'grounded theory' is generally understood in two ways (Charmaz 2008a, 2014b). Firstly, the term refers to the data analysis method used for a research process and secondly, it is understood as a theory or outcome of the research process. When both understandings of the term are evident in a research study, the methodology is generally referred to as pure grounded theory.

The development of grounded theory can be situated in the broader timeline of the developments in qualitative research. It emerged during the 1960s at a time when qualitative research was being evaluated by criteria used to measure the reliability and validity of quantitative research. The first proponents of grounded theory, American sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, reacted against the hegemony of quantitative research by arguing that qualitative research required its own canon for measurement (Clarke & Charmaz 2014:xxiii). Glaser and Strauss did not want qualitative research to be relegated to a secondary position, and sought to offer a qualitative methodology that would hold its own against quantitative methodologies at the time. In response, they offered a "practice oriented" (Bryant & Charmaz 2007a:6) research approach by putting data at the forefront of their methodological claims. A strength and key premise of the first variant of grounded theory methodology, and a characteristic that continues to define grounded theory, is that it "offers a foundation for rendering the processes and procedures of qualitative investigation visible, comprehensible and replicable" (Bryant & Charmaz 2007b:33). Other scientific methodologies of the time had largely been focused on testing and verifying theory rather than generating it. This focus saw qualitative research being used as preliminary research to support subsequent quantitative

instruments (Charmaz 1996:29) and, as a result, qualitative research remained largely an oral tradition in the USA without being theorised and without any written analytic strategies (Charmaz 2014a:5, 8). Hence, grounded theory was Glaser and Strauss's radical contribution to shift the focus and status of qualitative research. Owing to their seminal contribution, Birks and Mills (2015:3) recognise that "there is a trend in the literature to recognize Glaser and Strauss as the first generation of grounded theorists".

Methodologically speaking, Glaser and Strauss represented the two dominant, yet different, sociological traditions of the time (Hallberg 2014:32). Strauss was trained in qualitative research at the University of Chicago. His background was in symbolic interaction, influenced by the Chicago's School's emphasis on American pragmatism. In essence, the Chicago tradition is characterised by its "pragmatist, symbolic interactionist, and ethnographic" nature (Bryant & Charmaz 2007b:32). Glaser's background differed in that he was trained in quantitative methods at Columbia University, where the emphasis was to draw on positivism for empirical research (Bryant & Charmaz 2007b:32). Their research training backgrounds also influenced the trajectory of their work – both while working together and later when their thinking diverged.

Owing to the respective research backgrounds of Glaser and Strauss, grounded theory saw positivism and pragmatism come together in its first iteration. Glaser and Strauss's initial collaboration took shape in the School of Nursing at the University of California, San Francisco (Birks & Mills 2015:2). Here, they focused on a study of the terminally ill; they wanted to understand practices and procedures in hospitals and their research focused on the topic of dying and death in hospitals. Essentially, their aim was to understand a basic social process and to provide abstract theoretical explanations of the process. On a personal level, both sociologists had a direct commitment to the topic of dying since they had experienced the loss of a loved one shortly before commencing their research. Their research efforts culminated in the publication of their first co-authored book, titled *Awareness of dying* in 1965. *Awareness of dying* was followed by their second publication, *The discovery of grounded theory* in 1967. Their second publication is widely recognised and used as the foundation text of grounded theory although Charmaz (2014a:9) recognises Glaser's book, *Theoretical sensitivity* (1978), as providing "the most definitive early statement of the method".

In *The discovery of grounded theory*, Glaser and Strauss (1967:1) define grounded theory as the "discovery of theory from data". What this means is that grounded theory is the study of a social

phenomenon or situation using an empirical approach. Unlike other qualitative research approaches, in a grounded theory study, data analysis begins as soon as data emerge. As part of the analysis, the emerging data are coded and categories are assigned to the phenomenon under study through a constant process of comparing codes with one another as well as with other instances and participants' actions. During this iterative process, it is mandatory for the researcher to write memos; the purpose of writing memos is to note the emergent, conceptual categories and are therefore used to guide the researcher's analytic and theoretical development through the articulation of their thinking. The sample of a grounded theory study is not driven by representative needs but rather by theoretical needs – new data sources are sought to explain actions that emerge through the research process. Subsequently, a theory is generated to explain the social phenomenon under study. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967:31), "[g]rounded theory can be presented either as a well-codified set of propositions or in a running theoretical discussion, using conceptual categories and their properties". The form of the theory was not Glaser and Strauss's (1967) criterion for it being a theory; instead, its explanatory power is what makes it a theory for them.

The iterative nature of the grounded theory process affirms Glaser and Strauss's (1967:3) basic position that "generating grounded theory is a way of arriving at theory suited to its supposed uses". They contrasted this position "with theory generated by logical deduction from *a priori* assumptions" (Glaser & Strauss 1967:3). Their position is supported by their guidelines for systematic qualitative analysis, comprising their method of comparative analysis that they presented for sociologists as an iterative research process underpinned by an inductive mode of reasoning.

According to Bryant and Charmaz (2007:34), the title of Glaser and Strauss's book, *The discovery of grounded theory*, "attests to a clear epistemological orientation that assumes that reality can be discovered, explored and understood. From this perspective, reality is unitary, knowable, and waiting to be discovered". Glaser and Strauss adopted the prevailing positivist view of knowledge at the time and their focus on data and fit are suggestive of key positivist features. Furthermore, their philosophical position also favoured the researcher as being the expert whose knowledge surpassed that of the research participants (Bryant & Charmaz 2007b:40).

Discourse on the evolution of grounded theory has more recently made the philosophical underpinnings and nuances of Glaser and Strauss's work visible and this challenges the dominant data-oriented positivist reading of grounded theory. For example, Bryant and Charmaz (2007:34)

challenge the positivist view by observing that Glaser and Strauss did not write about researchers/authors exercising reflexivity, yet pragmatically they hint that the research process is about dialogue and is not as insular as made to seem; therefore, their empirical work seems to reveal social constructionist assumptions. As such, it should be noted that Glaser and Strauss did not make their epistemological positions explicit in their books, which steered clear “from wider epistemological and methodological issues” (Bryant & Charmaz 2007b:40). The first generation of grounded theorists are therefore criticised for not presenting grounded theory as a methodological package, focusing too heavily on its methods (Birks & Mills 2015:5). Nonetheless, there are four specific grounded theory strategies or methods that categorise grounded theory as such, namely coding, focused coding, memo writing and theoretical sampling. These methods are inextricably linked to all variants of grounded theory and their practical application and implications for this research are discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

A scientific view predominated at the time of Glaser and Strauss’s contribution to grounded theory. To reiterate, it was a time when the social sciences experienced pressure to fit the mould of the natural sciences (Bryant & Charmaz 2007b:35) and this influenced the dominant positivist reading of the founding texts of grounded theory. Hence, Glaser and Strauss’s seemingly scientific position seems ironic considering that the arrival of grounded theory was in reaction to the scientific nature of quantitative methodologies. Bryant and Charmaz (2007:33) claim that Glaser and Strauss “offered a way of mimicking this [quantitative] orthodoxy” for qualitative research. Another anomaly is that Glaser maintained that the methodology is not restricted to qualitative data yet, the title of their book, *Discovery*, included “strategies for qualitative research” as the sub-title (Bryant & Charmaz 2007a:2). Despite these criticisms, Glaser and Strauss’s contribution is a reflection of the broad trends in research across different disciplines at the time. For example, systematic and rationalist views of design methods were also common during the early 1960s with attempts to ‘scientise’ design as a means of giving it credibility as a research discipline (Bousbaci 2008; Cross 2006).

During the 1970s, grounded theory gained increasing popularity as a qualitative research methodology and Glaser and Strauss’s *Discovery of grounded theory* was used as a seminal text for postgraduate students, especially in the disciplines of sociology and nursing. Nevertheless, the epistemological grounds of research inquiry began to shift. Central concerns such as “science versus non-science” and “the relationship between knowledge and knower(s)” were debated. In addition, the neutrality of positivist social science that saw the researcher as a passive observer was challenged (Bryant & Charmaz 2007b:38). There was an evident gap in research methods to address

these new ways of thinking and consequently, the second variant of grounded theory emerged to address new developments in scholarship (Clarke & Charmaz 2014:xxi). The development of grounded theory at this time illustrates the viewpoint that historical eras shape research and more specifically that grounded theory has developed in a historical context (Annells 1997; Hallberg 2014). The historical development of grounded theory motivates the visual metaphor of a methodological development spiral when presenting the subsequent variants of grounded theory (McCann & Clark 2003; Mills, Bonner & Francis 2006). The different variants of grounded theory are therefore not in stark contrast; their position on a historical spiral explains and also characterises their varying ontological and epistemological orientations.

Although Glaser and Strauss enjoyed success from their four founding publications – *Awareness of dying* (1965), *The discovery of grounded theory* (1967), *Time for dying* (1968) and *Status passage* (1971) – the dichotomy of thought between the two founders (influenced by their training at Columbia and Chicago, respectively) ultimately resulted in divergent directions for grounded theory. Each continued their own research influenced by their earlier backgrounds. Glaser placed emphasis on emergent categories rather than structured categories from analysis of the empirical data. In contrast, Strauss's approach was more technical and this is evident in his own work, as well as publications with his co-author Juliet Corbin during the 1990s (Charmaz 2014a:11).

Strauss and Corbin are recognised for moving the grounded theory method towards a process of verification. In their book, *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*, Strauss and Corbin (1990) put forward a pragmatic approach that leads to a more planned and systematic theory construction. Their work is often viewed as a 'how-to' manual that offered technical procedures to students. Their procedural innovations were criticised by Glaser as being a new method, one that was not congruent with the "traditional Glaserian" version of grounded theory (Birks & Mills 2015:4). Independent of Glaser's critique, the difference between the first generation and second generation of grounded theory was posed as a debate in discourse, but neither Strauss nor Corbin offered any significant feedback or debate in this regard. Nevertheless, Strauss and Corbin seem to be more flexible in their second co-authored publication (Charmaz 2008a:400).

After their split, Glaser maintained his focus solely on methods to allow grounded theory to be used on a broader scale whereas Strauss's pragmatic training and theoretical perspectives on symbolic interactionism sustained his belief in action as "the core of experience and of sociological analysis"

(Bryant & Charmaz 2007a:8). Despite Strauss and Corbin's work being widely recognised as the second variant or school of grounded theory, Strauss's so-called prescriptive method continues to receive criticism. For example, Charmaz (2014a:49) is of the opinion that "*Basics* gained readers but lost the sense of emergence and open-ended character of Strauss's earlier volume and much of his empirical work".

Charmaz (1996, 2014a) also argues that the first two variants of grounded theory are characterised by overarching positivistic assumptions. Positivistic assumptions "lead to studies from the 'outside'" in that the world under study remains distant and external to the researcher (Charmaz 1996:31). In response, the third variant of grounded theory, proposed by Charmaz (2014a), took a constructivist turn towards a social constructivist perspective. However, Charmaz thinks of this development as constructivist renewal, not a constructivist arrival, because she claims that Glaser and Strauss assumed a limited social constructivist approach in their initial statement. As such, Charmaz (2014a:12) adopts the methodological strategies of Glaser and Strauss, namely their "inductive, comparative, emergent and open-ended approach". However, she extends the focus of the first generation of grounded theory beyond generality and objectivity towards relativity and reflexivity.

Charmaz's (2008a:398) constructivist viewpoint comprises examination of the following: "(1) the relativity of the researcher's perspectives, positions, practices, and research situation, (2) the researcher's reflexivity; and (3) depictions of social constructions in the studied world". These viewpoints connote an interpretive tradition that "relies on knowledge from the 'inside'" (Charmaz 1996:30), making the product of a grounded theory study an empirical one. Furthermore, this viewpoint supports Charmaz's belief that there is not a 'general' reality that can be observed; instead, there are multiple versions of reality (under particular conditions). Researchers cannot be a *tabula rasa* (Charmaz 2008a:402); they need to have an open mind but not an empty head. As such, Charmaz's version embraces subjectivities both in terms of attitude and approach. According to her this allows for reflexivity during the process in that researchers need to be mindful about how they construct a particular reality by means of constructing categories of the emerging data (Charmaz 2008a:402). This does not mean that researchers' own voices are favoured above those of the participants; their voices remain intact and key to the interpretation of a situation or reality. According to Mills et al. (2006:25), psychology, education and nursing are disciplines where constructivist grounded theory is recognised as a popular method of inquiry.

The 1990s article “Discovering chronic illness: Using grounded theory” by Charmaz is recognised as a precursor of her subsequent constructivist statement (Bryant & Charmaz 2007a:10). Charmaz’s seminal contribution to the development of grounded theory came at a time when there was another turn for qualitative research during the 1990s (Bryant & Charmaz 2007a; Charmaz 2008a). This was owing to the postmodern turn that challenged qualitative research assumptions. Postmodernism criticised distanced enquiry and objective researchers; by and large, postmodern critics of grounded theory were reacting against modernist epistemology. This had negative consequences for grounded theory because it was at risk of being regarded as an outdated, modernist method. This context encouraged the emergence of the third variant of constructivist grounded theory and at the same time, the developments served as responses to the criticism against its use. It should be noted, however, that while Charmaz introduced a third variant of grounded theory, Glaser (1992a) continued to support his objectivist stance where analysis remains at a general level, independent of specific sites and processes.

More recently, a fourth variant of grounded theory has taken shape, with the publication of Adele Clarke’s (2005b) *Situational analysis: Grounded theory after the postmodern turn*. As the name of the book suggests, situational analysis is characterised as a postmodern iteration of grounded theory. It reinterprets grounded theory with postmodern philosophical and methodological sensibilities with its view of social life being complex and unstable. Similar to Charmaz, Clarke (2005b) moves away from the earlier positivist roots of grounded theory and widens its scope for use in multiple sites and also across different disciplines. Clarke’s reinterpretation of grounded theory builds on Strauss’s pragmatism (Bryant & Charmaz 2007a:5) and draws specifically on his ecological social world framework (Clarke 2003). This influence has manifested in the creation of three types of maps when conducting a situational analysis study (Clarke & Charmaz 2014:xvi). Although Clarke uses Strauss’s framework as a point of departure for her thinking, her viewpoints differ from Strauss with regard to the nature of a theory. Clarke (2005a) believes that theories should be working understandings and not formal theories and therefore they need to be revised and updated to reflect changes. Charmaz holds a similar view. She is of the opinion that “[a] grounded theory is durable because it accounts for variation; it is flexible because it researchers can modify their emerging or established analyses as conditions change or further data are gathered” (Charmaz 2014a:47). It should be noted that Clarke and Charmaz’s viewpoints indicate their inclination towards generating substantive theories as opposed to formal theories in a grounded theory study. Hallberg (2014:34) succinctly explains the difference between a substantive theory and a formal theory: “Substantive theory concerns, and is applicable to, a delimited and specific area ...

whereas a formal theory concerns a more general process or phenomena with a broader application area”.

With regard to procedures, situational analysis continues to use grounded theory methods of coding and writing memos but Clarke extends the methods with a cartographic innovation. She includes the use of three maps as new approaches, specifically for situational analyses. Clarke (2003:553) describes the three maps as follows: “maps of situations including all the key human and nonhuman elements, maps of social worlds and arenas, and maps of positionality along salient analytic axes”. Influenced by Foucault, Clarke (2005a) offers methods of analysing discourse – narrative, visual as well as historical. She makes it clear that discourse analysis does not replace interaction with research participants but needs to be considered to allow for a broader conception of a situation. To this end, Clarke (2003:558) moves the metaphor of traditional focus of grounded theory on a “social process” towards an ecological metaphor of a “social world”. Like its precedents, Clarke’s approach towards a new conceptual framework for grounded theory extends its methodological possibilities and offers new methods for qualitative researchers.

The development of grounded theory outlined above clearly indicates its flexible nature for qualitative research in that the four different variants or schools cater for different epistemological positions. This is evident in the vast fields of study where grounded theory has been used. Clarke and Charmaz (2014:xxi) provide a comprehensive overview of the scope of grounded theory (GT):

GT’s roots are in sociology (e.g., Strauss & Corbin 1997), and it quickly spread into nursing (e.g., Schreiber & Stem 2001; Stem 2007). Soon GT was also taken up in organization and management studies (e.g., Locke 2001); education (e.g. Creswell 2007); library and information science (e.g., Star & Bowker 2007); counseling psychology (e.g. Fassinger 2005); computer and information science (e.g., Bryant 2002; Urquhart 2007); social work (e.g., Gilgun 1994); public health (e.g., Dahlgren, Emmelin, & Winkvist 2007); science, technology, and medicine studies (e.g., Clarke & Star 2008); and queer studies (e.g., Plummer 2005).

Owing to the flexible nature of grounded theory, it may be argued that methods can be selected from each variant to suit a particular research problem. However, it is my understanding that the choice of school adopted for a particular study should be used as a methodological package since it is not as straightforward to reconcile the different philosophical variations although their goal is to generate theory about a certain social phenomenon/situation.

2.3 Constructivist grounded theory

As a researcher, I had to “engage in a process of reflexive self-questioning” (Crouch & Pearce 2012:1324) in order to align my own philosophical perspectives and position with the appropriate methodology. Therefore, owing to my aforementioned axiological stance that resonates with my disciplinary perspective of being a “reflective practitioner” (Schön 1983), the radical humanist paradigm (Burrell & Morgan 1979) that is underpinned by the same emancipatory concerns as design for social change (recognising the nature of design activism as being a socially constructed process), Charmaz’s constructivist grounded theory was best suited to generate a substantive theory of design citizenship. Consequently, the rest of this chapter unpacks the nature of constructivist grounded theory in more detail by highlighting some links with contemporary design. The following sections further substantiate the fit of constructivist grounded theory for my study, which interfaces design activism and citizenship.

2.3.1 Principles of social constructivist grounded theory

As already suggested, the use of grounded theory results in the presentation of a theory that aims to interpret a social phenomenon. In particular, constructivist grounded theory moves away from the largely positivist roots of grounded theory, which dictate that theories emerge objectively from the data. Instead, constructivist grounded theory is aligned with the construction of a theory by the researcher through close interaction with the data. Nonetheless, this departure from earlier statements of grounded theory does not signify that constructivist grounded theory is not an emergent method.

Charmaz (2008b:155-156) presents a strong argument for constructivist grounded theory as an emergent method. She extends her understanding of emergence to include the method of grounded theory itself and not just the end product of the study as being emergent. Charmaz (2008b:157) recognises emergence as “a temporal concept” that “presupposes a past, assumes the immediacy of the present, and implies a future”. In essence, emergence facilitates the interpretation of a phenomenon that could not be anticipated at the onset of the research and presents its qualitative properties. The constructivist position sees the qualitative properties of a phenomenon related to and reflective of a particular time, social condition and interactional situation (Charmaz 2008b:160). The concept of temporality relates to both collective action as well as individual behaviour and hence, researchers who adopt a constructivist stance need to be mindful of their own subjective experiences and the collective actions of their research participants during the research process. Charmaz’s (2008b) position on emergence is therefore predicated on the researcher’s approach,

which influences the data generation and the questions the researcher asks of the data during the research process and ultimately, the construction of a theory that remains grounded in the data. As a consequence, it is significant that constructivist grounded theorists draw on language and shared meanings to construct and communicate a particular reality.

By adopting a constructivist approach to grounded theory for my study, its emergent nature means that my research method or strategy “does not stand outside the research process” but “resides within it” (Charmaz 2008b:160). Therefore, in order to arrive at new knowledge about design citizenship it was necessary to be guided by constructivist principles to allow me to operate from ‘within’. Charmaz (2008b) identifies four overarching principles that researchers need to adhere to when following a social constructivist grounded theory methodology. The principles do not signify a rigid research process and allow for flexibility while at the same time, adopting a specific research ethos. The four principles are used to guide the following discussion; even though they are discussed separately, in a grounded theory study they are put collectively into action and reflect my research approach.

According to Charmaz (2008b:403), researchers need to:

- Treat the research process *itself* as a social construction
- Scrutinize research decisions and directions
- Improvise methodological and analytic strategies throughout the research process
- Collect sufficient data to discern and document how research participants construct their lives and worlds.

2.3.1.1 Treating the research process as a social construction

The first principle of treating the research process as a social construction means that researchers should not use a fixed recipe to approach their research. Therefore, Charmaz does not prescribe the application of specific ways of doing and advises that researchers need to respond to emerging information in a way that respects that information. In this regard, Bryant and Charmaz (2007:11) recall philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein’s admonition “don’t think but look” to delineate the distinctive feature of researchers being observant in a grounded theory study. This means that the researcher must not apply concepts, but should allow them to be developed from the data in a more organic manner. Treating the research process as a social construction mimics the constructionist viewpoint that there are multiple realities and through interpretation, it is the researcher’s task to construct one view of that reality.

From a design perspective, the constructivist viewpoint of recognising multiple realities echoes Nelson and Stolterman's (2012) affirmation of the "real" as one of the first principle of design. The link between the first principle of constructivist grounded theory in the list above and the "real" as one of the first principles of design is two-fold. Firstly, the real refers to the everyday reality or the social settings in which designers operate. Similarly, grounded theory is situated in the real-world because researchers stay close to the ground; they immerse themselves directly in the world under study. Secondly, the real does not call for design answers that are definitive or absolute. Instead, being adequate is a measure. Similarly, Charmaz (2014b:184) claims that a grounded theory study needs to apply "interpretive sufficiency" as a criterion for the construction of a theory; the reason for this is that the researcher does not aim to present an absolute truth or an empirical generalisation (Christians 2000; Denzin 1989). Hence, the design measure of being adequate or appropriate (Owen 2005, 2007) can also be related to the nature of a substantive grounded theory that results from a constructivist perspective.

2.3.1.2 Being a reflexive researcher

The treatment of a research process as a social construction establishes a particular role for the researcher in the grounded theory process. This relates to the second principle that constructivist grounded theorists need to adhere to, namely to "scrutinise research decisions and directions". For constructivist grounded theory, researchers need to be reflexive practitioners to put this principle into practice. Denzin and Lincoln's (2011:4-5) idea of the qualitative researcher as an "interpretive bricoleur" is applicable here with regard to the constructivist researcher understanding that theory is an emergent construction, shaped by a multitude of variables, both personal and contextual. Birks and Mills (2015:62) note that "[u]sing techniques to promote a reflexive approach to grounded theory research will assure the quality and ethical integrity of your work by identifying how you and your history are present in the research process". Personally, as a designer, I see this principle as an extension of the notion of being a reflective practitioner – reflecting-in-action and reflecting-on-action (Lawson 2006:299) – to being a professional who can recognise the influence of their discipline and their values and make this explicit in their grounded theory that takes the form of a "reflexive montage" (Denzin & Lincoln 2011:6).

This constructivist perspective therefore allows the researcher to be self-conscious while at the same time having an active voice in the research. With regard to the voice of the researcher, Denzin and Lincoln (2011:11) claim that a researcher "speaks from within a distinct, interpretive community, which configures, in its special way, the multicultural, gendered components of the

research act". Therefore, in a constructivist grounded theory project, it is acceptable and even advisable for the researcher's profile to come to the fore in order to situate and contextualise how the researcher approaches the research question and examines it within the scope of the research methodology.

To this end, I wish to contribute to the growing body of work on design activism by disseminating new knowledge and subsequently invigorating disciplinary dialogue about design citizenship via this study. In addition, I would like to contribute qualitative evidence of the potential of design activism in South Africa and engage key players to consider the role of design consciously as an alternate problem-processing methodology to address many of the nation's social problems. This research project also extends to my teaching, learning and community engagement responsibilities as a design educator at a tertiary education institution. My teaching philosophy is informed by John Dewey's (1938) and Paulo Freire's (1970) conceptions of experiential learning. In particular, my teaching philosophy aligns with Freire's (1970) belief that students are active participants and not empty vessels whose task is merely to receive and store information. This facilitates praxis, namely action and reflection, which allows for an iterative and critical design process and allows students to engage in dialogue with the situations in which they are placed.

Similarly, as a design researcher, the adoption of a reflexive approach for a research project adds more rigour to the process. More importantly, like being a design educator, a reflexive approach allows me, as the researcher, to adopt the role of a facilitator instead of being an expert who may be likely to impose a hierarchy in the field or in related research environments. Ultimately, over and above exploring the identified research question, the aim of the grounded theory study is to nurture researchers with the necessary research skills so that they can see themselves not only as professionals but also as citizens who embody good civic values.

2.3.1.3 Using an abductive mode of reasoning

From my understanding, the third principle of improvising methods and analytic strategies relates broadly to the modes of reasoning used by researchers doing grounded theory studies. A social constructionist approach to grounded theory allows for innovation in the research process since it does not offer rigid guidelines as Strauss and Corbin provided (Charmaz 2008a:398). Primarily, constructivist grounded theorising differs from hypothetically driven, deductive research in that the process of deduction, the researcher applies general rules to a specific case (Richardson & Kramer 2014:165). Writing from a design vantage point, Steen (2013:17) explains that for deductive

reasoning, “one starts with two or more premises and then draws a conclusion”. This type of reasoning is employed for purposes of justification. Conversely, inductive reasoning means making theoretical moves from particular to the general (Bryant & Charmaz 2007a:15) where “one starts with a series of observations and then speculates about a pattern” (Steen 2013:17) to arrive at conclusions that are probable. Inductive reasoning is common in the natural and social sciences for purposes of discovery. Traditionally, these two modes of reasoning have been favoured as the dominant modes of thinking in a Western tradition in order to determine and explain the ‘truth’ about natural or man-made phenomena (Crouch & Pearce, 2012; Dorst 2011; Golsby-Smith 2008). However, since the first assumption of constructivist grounded theory is that local circumstances are particular and therefore unique in nature, abduction is gaining favour as the distinguishing logic of grounded theory (Charmaz 2014a; Coffey & Atkinson 1996; Richardson & Kramer 2014). Abduction, as a type of inference to explain observed facts, has its roots in the work of American pragmatist philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce’s concept of pragmatism (Richardson & Kramer 2014:165).

Abduction does not discredit the two, traditional modes of reasoning but goes beyond them. It demonstrates that neither deduction nor induction is sufficient on their own to meet the aims of a constructivist grounded theory. As such, each of the three modes of reasoning relate to how theory is developed by means of structuring research design methods for a specific research undertaking (Richardson & Kramer 2014:166). For example, induction is present in grounded theorising when the researcher generates codes or categories from the data. Similarly, deductive thinking is employed to determine how the identified categories relate to the other data. However, one of the key driving forces in the grounded theory process is to make imaginative, theoretical leaps from the data. The grounded theory research process is therefore scientific with regard to intellectual and analytical rigour, but at the same time it is a creative process in that the researcher needs to name and relate categories that emerge from the data for purposes of theorising. Charmaz (2006:188) describes the abductive reasoning process eloquently by explaining that “[a]bductive inference entails considering all possible theoretical explanations for the data, forming hypotheses for each possible explanation, checking them empirically by examining data, and pursuing the most plausible explanation”. From a design perspective, the following explanation of abduction by Kolko (2010:20) is akin to Charmaz’s description: “abduction can be thought of as the argument to the best explanation. It is the hypothesis that makes the most sense given observed phenomenon or data and based on prior experience”.

Accordingly, Richardson and Kramer (2014:164) believe that abduction makes the process of grounded theorising visible and flexible. They further argue that abduction, as the logic of grounded theory, accommodates the researcher's prior theoretical insights while still allowing the categories and their related properties to be grounded in the empirical data. In essence, Richardson and Kramer's (2014) argument is that prior theoretical insights act as a bridge between grounded theories and experiences of people and social phenomenon in the real-world. This viewpoint indicates that constructivists make their disciplinary influences explicit while at the same time reiterating that researchers keep an open mind during the research process. Owing to Dorst's (2011, 2015) argument that abduction is the core of design thinking, my own disciplinary influence and use of abductive modes of reasoning in design resonate here.

Cross (2011) views design thinking, or by extension abductive thinking, as an inherent skill or one that may be nurtured in designers through their educational and professional trajectory. Cross (2011:75) identifies three significant and strategic aspects of design thinking common amongst designers and not exclusive to a particular design discipline: "(1) taking a broad 'systems approach' to the problem, rather than accepting narrow problem criteria; (2) 'framing' the problem in a distinctive and sometimes rather personal way; and (3) designing from 'first principles'". These three aspects share similarities with constructivist grounded theory. Firstly, a broad approach is adopted for grounded theory in that it asks a broad question in the field and aims to work empirically from the ground up in addressing (and/or refining) that question. Therefore, the initial research question of a study is broad; the research questions for this study provided in the first chapter are a case in point. Secondly, a substantive theory can be regarded as an act of framing a phenomenon in a distinctive way; it is characterised as being localised and contextual in that it explains a phenomenon as one reality in a given space and at a given time. Furthermore, phenomena are explained in a personal way because constructivism embraces the researcher's voice and background. Thirdly, as with this discussion on the principles of constructivist grounded theory, a grounded theory research design is informed by a specific set of principles to which researchers should adhere.

2.3.1.4 Entering the world of the research participants

The fourth principle of constructivist grounded theory considers the relationship of researchers with their research participants. This constructivist principle calls for researchers to know the world through their participants in a way where there should ideally be a subjective, inter-relationship between the researcher and research participant (Mills et al. 2006). According to Charmaz (2014b:160), direct and even ongoing interaction between researcher and participant is favoured in

order to facilitate an in-depth exploration of participants' actions and experiences. To this end, there are a variety of research methods that researchers can use to enter in the world of participants and to engage with them directly. The most typical method advocated by Charmaz (2014a:57) to get access to rich data is open-ended, intensive interviewing where, "[d]uring the interview, the participant talks; [and] the interviewer encourages, listens, and learns". This is in keeping with qualitative research, defined by Denzin and Lincoln (2011:3) as "a situated activity that locates the observer in the world".

By meeting research participants in person, it becomes easier for researchers to attend to any inflections or cues from demeanour that may arise from the participants while sharing their experiences. Since the core category of grounded theory is to make constant comparisons (Hallberg 2014), it follows that researchers listen to what each participant says and compares this information to what other participants seem to do in the same or similar instances. These interpretations by the researcher facilitate the naming of categories or codes from the data that help define action and as a consequence serve as the "analytic scaffolding" (Charmaz 2014b:172) in a grounded theory process.

The direct immersion and inter-relationship between the researcher and participant is used to level critique against the use of constructivist grounded theory as a research methodology. Having said this, it should be noted that the critique arises from Glaser (1992b), who sees the researcher intruding in the world of the participant. Yet, from the overview of the development of grounded theory earlier in this chapter, it was evident that Glaser's positivist stance cannot be reconciled with the constructivist perspective against the researcher as a neutral observer.

The direct relationship between the researcher and the research participants makes a constructivist grounded theory research process both interactive and iterative in nature. Interestingly, the grounded theory process is suggestive of contemporary co-design processes that see designers engaging end users and becoming fully immersed in a particular setting from the onset of a project. In a constructivist grounded theory process and a design process respectively, it is also not uncommon to see the co-construction of meaning. In some instances of constructivist grounded theory, respondents are consulted during the data analysis stages. Here, "respondent validation can be seen as a sort of triangulation" (Hallberg 2014:36) and can also help the researcher to interpret the participant's experience more closely.

Significantly, with regard to grounded theory, Mills et al. (2006:32) recognise “the researcher as the author of a coconstruction of experience and meaning”. In both instances, the researcher and designer act as a conduit to make other people’s voices and desires heard and are consequently responsible for authoring a text or end product. This task of authorship brings with it an ethical responsibility and therefore ethical clearance and consent are mandatory for designers and researchers when dealing with human subjects. Within the context of a doctoral study, a candidate needs permission from the university’s ethics committee to pursue the proposed research and secondly, a researcher needs permission from the research participants. The specific ethical considerations for this research are detailed in Chapter Three along with the related research methods that were selected and carried out for purposes of this research.

2.3.2 The potential of constructivist grounded theory for social justice research

Qualitative research continues to confront a changing world; it embraces tensions and encourages shifts and methodological debates (Denzin & Lincoln 2011). Broadly speaking, qualitative research discourse now straddles “[m]ixed methodologies and calls for scientifically based research, on the one side, renewed calls for social justice inquiry from the critical social science tradition on the other” (Denzin & Lincoln 2011:1). On the latter end of this qualitative research range, the future, categorised as the eighth historical moment of qualitative research (see Table 2), opens the door for the social sciences and humanities to have “critical conversations about democracy, race, gender, class, nation states, globalization, freedom and community” (Denzin & Lincoln 2011:3).

From the critical social science tradition, Charmaz (2011, 2014b) argues for the value of constructivist grounded theory to advance social justice research as one of many substantive areas where constructivist grounded theory can be used. It should be noted that grounded theory is not the only methodology for studying social justice issues in terms of power and inequality. For example, participatory action research is another example of a methodology that is adopted with the intention of social change. Nonetheless, Charmaz (2014a, 2014b) remains the seminal voice on the topic within contemporary grounded theory discourse. Even though Charmaz’s constructivist grounded theory was conceived during the postmodern moment and supports the narrative turn in qualitative research, her methods for grounded theorising are present in the current qualitative research moment to advance social justice inquiry. Since this research adopts the view that design thinking helps to facilitate empowerment and ideally aims to shift the empowerment towards

emancipation, social justice is inextricably linked to the concept of design citizenship that is under investigation in this study.⁷

As discussed previously, grounded theory provides analytic tools for researchers, and the grounded theories that result from the application of these analytic tools or methods move the research beyond description to explicate the conditions under which particular phenomena become apparent. Moreover, constructivist grounded theory in particular embraces subjective experiences through the use of its methods. Charmaz (2014b) proffers that researchers need to build on constructivist grounded theory for purposes of social justice inquiry since constructivist tools can be applied to the analysis of social processes with a view towards understanding larger structural processes and actions. Charmaz (2014b) reports that many social justice inquiries still rest on positivist assumptions. Hence, the value of constructivist grounded theory for social justice inquiry moves grounded theory away from the hegemony of positivism and, to some extent, challenges the status quo of dominant research paradigms for social justice research.

The nature of social justice inquiry is critical and its focus reminiscent of design for social change in that it aims to create better societies and a more equitable world. Since social justice inquiry focuses on lived experiences and therefore what it means to be human, Charmaz (2014b:160) believes that “[i]t prompts reassessment of our roles as national and world citizens”. Over and above the actions of citizens, social justice inquiry also looks at the actions of two more dominant actors, namely organisations and social institutions. This suggests that social justice issues exist on an individual, micro level as well as a structural, macro level. Furthermore, action is predicated on resources where these resources influence interactions and outcomes of the interactions. This viewpoint can be seen in Martha Nussbaum’s (2011) normative theory of the capability approach, an approach where people’s freedom to achieve well-being is linked to their ability to act with their available resources or capabilities. In addition to resources, action and experiences by respective actors are also inherently linked to structural and social hierarchies as well as policies that may dictate and/or expect certain behaviour.

From a pragmatic research perspective, constructivist grounded theory allows the researcher to define and explain the subjective actions and relationships amongst these three actors in the specific

⁷ For purposes of this research, the concept of social justice is aligned with Nancy Fraser’s (1990) perspective, which views social justice from the perspective of participatory parity. She argues that social justice requires non-hierarchical interaction between members of a society where members regard one another as peers. As such, her theory of social justice considers plurality as a tool for emancipation.

context by means of coding emerging data. The coding process also helps to uncover the assumptions held by the actors, that is the research participants, as well as the researcher. Here, the word 'actors' reminds the constructivist grounded theorist that "[p]eople are active, creative beings who *act*, not merely behave" and justice and injustice are regarded as "enacted processes" (Charmaz 2014b:158, 177). The following quote by Charmaz (2014b:180) uses an eloquent theatrical metaphor to explain the notion of enactment across the range of social justice actors and the relationships amongst them: "Viewing life as theater can alert social justice researchers to main actors, minor characters and audiences, acts and scenes, roles and scripts, and front-stage impressions and back-stage realities".

Charmaz's (2014b) call for the value and use of constructivist grounded theory for social justice rests on her argument for constructivist grounded theory to build on the Chicago School's tradition of pragmatism. To reiterate, "the Chicago school assumes human agency, attends to language and interpretation, views social processes as open-ended and emergent, studies action, and addresses temporality" (Charmaz 2014b:175). In order to deflect criticism that a grounded theory is an empirical generalisation, Charmaz (2014b:176-180) presents five steps for constructivist grounded theory to reclaim the Chicago School of thought as a means of presenting a strong empirical foundation and compelling evidence for social justice arguments:

- Immersing oneself directly in the field and thereby establishing intimate familiarity with the research setting and the research participants;
- focusing on subjective, situational and social meanings and processes;
- closely studying and comparing action through the research process;
- providing detail about the social context where action occurs; and
- paying close and careful attention to language as a medium of communication.

These steps make explicit the interactive and iterative constructivist grounded theory research process, as well as aligning the process of grounded theorising with themes and values commonly associated with social justice, such as equality or fairness, human rights, power, privilege, inequalities, legitimacy, and so forth. These themes are not forced on the data but are used as sensitising concepts by the researcher as a guide to interpret the data that emerges from one-on-one participant engagement. Direct engagement with participants also opens up the space for the research participants to be reflexive by giving them the space to consider their own values and related actions under discussion. In this way, constructivist grounded theory for social justice purposes speaks to the interpretive tradition of qualitative research that has, in the words of Denzin and Lincoln (2011:11), a "political orientation that is radical, democratic, and interventionist".

2.3.3 Criteria for evaluating a constructivist grounded theory

For any research project, there are criteria to determine the quality of a study. These criteria are generally dependent on the research process and are therefore based on the use of relevant research methods and strategies. In this way, the methods themselves serve as checks and measures for the quality of a study where the rigour of the methods is directly proportional to the quality of the end product of the research. This same outlook holds true for the quality of a grounded theory. For example, in a grounded theory study, the constant and comparative analysis of data serves as empirical checks during the theorising process and influences the quality of the grounded theory. Also, grounded theorists tend to rest the validity of their studies on the criterion of the saturation of categories (Charmaz 2014b). 'Saturation' is a common term in grounded theory studies and denotes that nothing new is happening in the data (Charmaz 2014a:213); nothing new means that no new properties emerge for the core categories from the data. However, since constructivist grounded theory moves away from positivist philosophical underpinnings, positivist criteria of fit, relevance, workability and modifiability (Glaser & Strauss 1967) are rendered unsuitable (Charmaz 2014b). The more general qualitative criteria of validity, reliability and objectivity are also deemed insufficient (Denzin & Lincoln 2011:13). The reason for this is because the grounded theory that results from a constructivist research process is not intended to be evaluated using a measure of right or wrong. Instead, grounded theory needs to be applicable and also meaningful to the substantive area of study.

Another reason for specific criteria for constructivist grounded theories is owing to its relevance and value for social justice inquiry. Charmaz (2014b) asserts that the criteria for earlier grounded theory statements need to be revisited and more importantly, revised to support social justice ends. Charmaz's stance is reminiscent of Glaser and Strauss's (1967) reaction against the application of quantitative criteria to measure the quality of a research study; only, in this instance, constructivist grounded theory has reacted against positivist measures and has sought alternate criteria for measurement. The four alternate criteria – credibility, originality, resonance and usefulness – are proposed by Charmaz (2014b) to guide and gauge the quality of a grounded theory. In addition, Charmaz (2014b:185) stresses that the rhetorical device of the theory is another criterion for grounded theory studies in social justice inquiry. Owing to the emergent nature of the grounded theory process, the theory is not forced or moulded to fit an existing theoretical framework and therefore the narrative format of the theory comes into play as a literary criterion for the emergent theory.

Credibility as a criterion is dependent on the depth of empirical data that are used. This relates to the researcher's intimate familiarity with the setting of the study as well as the scope of empirical observations in the data. Effectively, the credibility of a study is greater when there is sufficient data to support the claims offered in the theory. The second criterion, originality, is in keeping with the use of grounded theory to study and explain phenomena that have not been studied in sufficient detail before. Hence, for a study to meet the originality criterion, the study should offer new insights and the constant comparative analysis should inform a new conceptual presentation of the data. In addition, for a grounded theory that has a social justice concern, the social significance of the theory is an important gauge for originality since its implications have a theoretical as well as a pragmatic reach (Charmaz 2014b:184-185). Together, originality and credibility contribute to the resonance and the usefulness of the theory (Charmaz 2014a:338, 2014b:185).

Resonance refers broadly to the reach and understanding of the theory. One of the questions that Charmaz (2014b:185) poses in this regard is whether "the categories portray the fullness of the studied experience". Likewise, the measure for resonance is the extent to which the analytic interpretations, or in other words the findings of the study, make sense to the people involved with or influenced by the phenomenon. Resonance emphasises the situated and contextual nature of a substantive grounded theory and therefore supports the final criterion presented by Charmaz (2014a, 2014b), namely usefulness. Usefulness as a criterion considers how the grounded theory contributes to knowledge and how it produces new knowledge. In terms of social justice, usefulness questions how the research can contribute to making a better society (Charmaz 2014b:185). This fourth criterion invokes Denzin and Lincoln's (2011:13) criterion of trustworthiness for constructivism, where trustworthiness is ultimately linked to values of social justice such as accountability and equity.

Since my study is aligned with the constructivist school of grounded theory, and design activism has as its core a concern for social justice, I have also adopted the aforementioned criteria in this study as measures to guide my methods for constructing a substantive theory of design citizenship.

I return to these criteria in Chapter Six, the concluding chapter of the study, to evaluate the grounded theory for credibility, originality, resonance with the research audience and its usefulness for the research audience. My research methods have also been made transparent in the following chapter to enable readers to apply these criteria and determine the quality of my study. Both the topic of study and the constructivist philosophy that guides the research process support the idea of a democratic dialogue between multiple actors, in this instance, the researcher and the reader.

2.4 Summary

Table 4 depicts Denzin and Lincoln's (2011:12) five phases that define a qualitative research process. These phases build on one another to make explicit the researcher's ontological and epistemological perspectives that underpin a research project. This process is therefore used in conclusion to this chapter to reflect on the philosophical positioning – relativist ontology and a subjectivist epistemology – as well as the structure of the thesis thus far.

PHASE	DESCRIPTION
Phase 1	The researcher as a multicultural subject
Phase 2	Theoretical paradigms and perspectives
Phase 3	Research strategies
Phase 4	Methods of collection and analysis
Phase 5	The art practices, and politics of interpretation and evaluation

Table 4: Denzin and Lincoln's (2011:12) five phases of a qualitative research process.

Whereas Chapter One considered the overarching radical humanist research paradigm of the study and located myself (Phase 1), the design researcher, in the history of design as a reflective practitioner who embraces and engages the multiplicity of end user's voices in pursuit of design for social change, this chapter presented constructivism as the theoretical perspective of the research (Phase 2). Since research strategies can be described as putting research perspectives into motion, the research perspective of constructivism is inextricably linked to grounded theory as the research strategy of the study (Phase 3). Hence, the principles of the constructivist paradigm adopted for the study were interwoven with Charmaz's iteration of the third school of grounded theory in this chapter. The choice of the constructivist school of grounded theory was arrived at after a discussion on the historical development of grounded theory, which was necessary to distinguish constructivist grounded theory from its positivist antecedents and to show that it has its own history and holds its own in contemporary grounded theory discourse. Moreover, the potential of constructivist grounded theory for social justice ends as well as its criteria for purposes of social inquiry was also elucidated. Since only a brief overview of the grounded theorising process was presented in this chapter to explain Glaser and Strauss's founding statement of grounded theory, the methods of collection and analysis as Phase 4 of this research process remain to be discussed. Hence, in the following chapter, the research design of the study is presented as a set of methods or guidelines for

data collection and analysis that are in keeping with Charmaz's suggestions to produce a constructivist grounded theory.

Phase 5, the final phase of the research process, the politics of interpretation and evaluation, was also presented in this chapter. This was done by considering the criteria for determining the quality of a grounded theory with a view towards social justice. Since the practices and politics of interpretation are particular to the constructivist paradigm of qualitative research and by extension to the research strategy of grounded theory, the constructivist practices and principles of interpretation of a reality also permeate the next chapter, and serve as the thread to connect the philosophical and pragmatic underpinnings of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN – GROUNDED THEORY APPLIED

3.1 Introduction

Birks and Mills (2015:36) assert that there has to be “methodological congruence” within the research design of a study. Consequently, this chapter presents the research design of my study in accordance with the constructivist grounded methodology outlined in Chapter Two. Like any research methodology, grounded theory is a set of systematic methods for collecting and analysing qualitative data. According to Charmaz (2014a:26), “[a] method provides *a* tool to enhance seeing but does not provide automatic insight ... How researchers use methods matters”; hence, the research choices affect the effectiveness of data management for a study. Charmaz’s (1990) example of the constructivist grounded theory research process used for her study on chronic illness, together with my personal philosophical position that was explained in Chapter One, informs the choice of my methods for data generation and data analysis. In order to explain the pragmatic application of these methods in my study, the work of Charmaz (2014a) as well as Birks and Mills (2015) served as the seminal guide for my research design.

The logic of grounded theory is iterative, but for purposes of presenting my research design, the research methods are examined in a linear fashion in this chapter. To this end, the procedural steps are discussed independently, but their relation to one another is presented in Figure 3, a diagram of my research process to demonstrate my overall procedural precision. Data generation methods are detailed and are followed by data analysis methods and strategies. The chapter concludes with the guiding principles of generating a substantive theory using a narrative format.

3.2 Data generation

This section of Chapter Two provides information about the process of generating rich data for the study. In general, in qualitative studies, this phase of the research process is referred to as data collection. However, for purposes of a grounded theory study, Birks and Mills (2015:71) note that there is a distinction to be made between data collection and data generation, albeit a subjective one. They state:

In grounded theory, we refer to both data collection and generation to acknowledge the different roles that the researcher has in relation to the process of data acquisition. Data generation involves the researcher directly engaging with the data source (for example, a participant) to produce materials for analysis. Conversely, the researcher has limited influence on the data source in the process of data collection (Birks & Mills 2015:71).

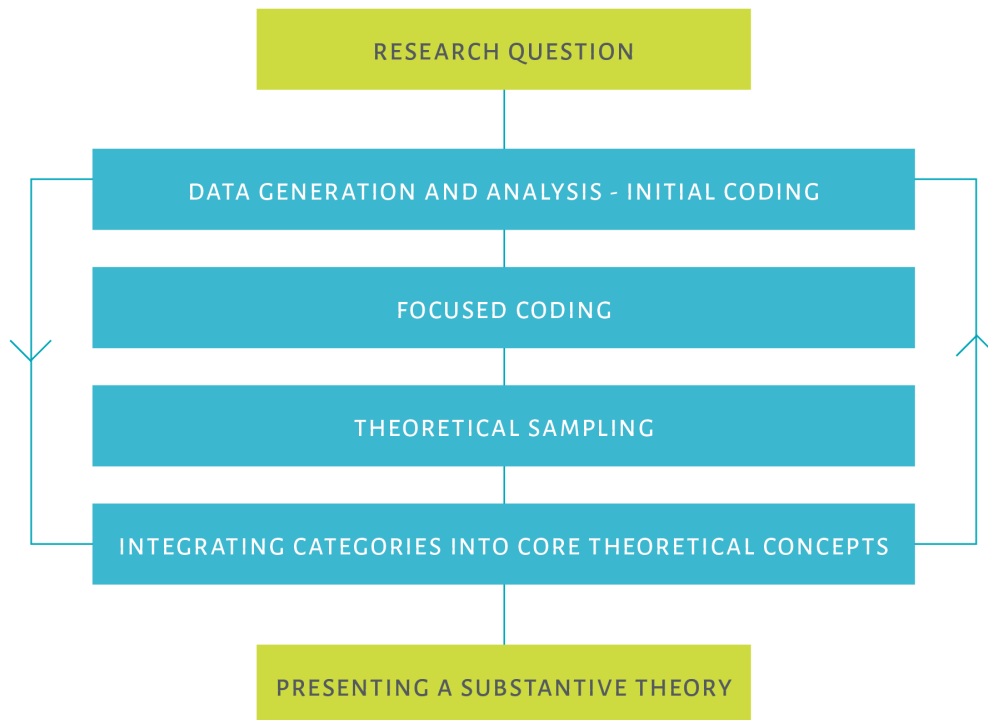


Figure 3: Ordering of constructivist grounded theory methods (adapted from Birks & Mills 2015:88).

Owing to the constructivist methodology that underpins this research, I entered the world of the participants and engaged directly with them in order to co-construct the conversation about their realities, and also to interpret their actions and experiences. Charmaz (2014a:24) claims that “[s]eeing research participants’ lives from the inside often gives a researcher otherwise unobtainable views”. Therefore, I adopted and henceforth use the term ‘data generation’ as the umbrella term to explain the research methods that were used for producing the rich data for the study.

In addition to using intensive interviews as the primary research method for data generation I also took note of published information about experiences of the design interventions under examination. Since design interventions are often publicised and discussed on online platforms and in the media, I wanted to get a more holistic overview of the way in which the interventions functioned and the effect(s) that they may have had on citizens and the broader public. Participant observations and informal conversations during design interventions therefore informed the data generation process as well. My immersion as a citizen and not just a researcher allowed me to speak from within. Nonetheless, such extant documents and engagements did not override the interviews as the primary research method for generating data; they were treated as secondary to caution

against viewing information out of context of my substantive area of study or forcing any preconceived ideas.

3.2.1 Research background and units of analysis

My initial review of literature revealed that while design activism is a robust area of theory and practice, its implications for citizenship have not been explored in sufficient detail. Geographically and culturally, design activism discourse takes place predominantly from an American and European perspective. Owing to the ephemeral nature of design activism, there is also a tendency to describe the conceptualisation, intention and the nature of the immediate participation of design interventions instead of their civic significance. By and large, instances of design activism in South Africa are documented on popular media platforms such as newspapers, social media, blogs and other websites; thus, their exploration seems to remain predominantly at a descriptive level where the recordings are not aimed at measuring the results of the intervention. The lack of measurement of design interventions is not only a South African concern, but is also raised in design activism discourse as an ongoing concern and challenge on a global scale. Despite a need for measurement tools for design interventions, my research was not aimed at identifying the results of South African design interventions, but rather my aim was to collect empirical evidence to understand the design activism process by South African citizens in order to arrive at a substantive theory of design citizenship.

The gap identified in the review of discourse on design activism prompted this study to advance research on the topic of design citizenship. Accordingly, the adoption of the grounded theory methodology allowed me, as the researcher, to begin with an open research question about a particular social process: What is the relationship between design activism and citizenship? In order to answer this primary research question, instances of design activism – design interventions – served as the units of analysis for the research. Neuman (2014:69) defines the units of analysis for a research study as “[t]he units, cases, or parts of social life that are under consideration”. Out of a personal and pedagogic research interest in design for development,⁸ I followed design interventions in South Africa closely from 2012 onwards. As such, I was familiar with some initiatives facilitated by NGOs in Pretoria and Cape Town. However, my research interest for my doctoral study developed specifically regarding the social justice concerns that design interventions aim to address within a South African context. Hence, these two cities were selected as the geographic locations for

⁸ ‘Design for development’ is used here as a term to denote design that has as its aim social development and/or transformation.

my fieldwork. Specific details about the selection, sampling of participants and the related ethical considerations are covered in the following sub-section.

3.2.2. Selection of participants – sample profile, recruitment and ethical considerations

The recruitment of participants was prompted by the two geographic locations of the identified NGOs: The Cape Town Partnership, The Social Justice Coalition and the Tshwane Leadership Foundation (TLF). The two former are based in Cape Town, the legislative capital of South Africa, whereas TLF operates in Pretoria, the administrative capital of the country. A description of the organisations follows, and I refer in particular to the historical background and organisational dynamics of each in order to justify my selection.

The Cape Town Partnership (hereafter Partnership) began as a non-profit organisation in 1999 in an attempt to encourage businesses to remain in the central business district where poor safety and cleanliness were compelling people to leave.⁹ The Partnership notes that at the time, its thinking about cities was focused on seeing them “as economic engines, places driven by investment” (About Cape Town Partnership [sa]). A decade later, with the changing views of cities as places for people, the Partnership also transformed its focus by partnering with the City of Cape Town (the local municipality) to develop the city in ways that extended beyond business management. The need for a cohesive Central City Development Strategy motivated the reassessment of roles by both the Partnership and the City of Cape Town. This gave impetus to urban design projects. The collaboration between the Partnership and the City of Cape Town continued with the primary focus “on putting people first; on participation and people-based placemaking, not destination marketing” (About Cape Town Partnership [sa]). The 2010 Soccer FIFA World Cup held in South Africa and the Partnership’s subsequent involvement with Cape Town’s bid for the 2014 World Design Capital paved the way for the organisation to work closely with the city’s creative industry for initiatives and interventions. Creative Week, and more specifically, the City Walk Saturdays facilitated by the organisation, were the two design interventions that informed the choice of extending the invitation for participation to the Partnership. The City Walk Saturdays, the more recent of the two interventions, was conceived and implemented in 2015 as a placemaking initiative that would afford citizens an opportunity to participate and contribute directly to the inner city in an attempt to see it as their own space (City Walk Cape Town to launch in CBD 2015).

⁹ After being in operation for 17 years, the Partnership ceased to exist in 2017. One of the reasons for this is that the City of Cape Town withdrew its funding grant for the organisation and as such, it was no longer sustainable to run the organisation without the funds and other support from local government.

The second Cape Town organisation that was identified, The Social Justice Coalition (hereafter Coalition), is a member-based organisation that is situated in Khayelitsha, one of Cape Town's sizeable informal settlements. The Coalition was formed in 2008 as a social movement that "works to advance the constitutional rights to life, dignity, equality, freedom and safety for all people, but especially those living in informal settlements across South Africa" (About us [sa]). A distinguishing characteristic of the Coalition is that it is a member-based organisation (there are 14 branches). Since it is not affiliated with any political party, the organisation prides itself on being a true grassroots movement that aims to create awareness about safety and security, thereby encouraging citizens to be accountable for their actions. Likewise, the organisation wants to foster accountable and effective government by the city through democratic dialogue, which includes dissent, with citizens living in the informal settlements. Some of the pressing social issues that are addressed by the organisation include sanitation, the criminal justice system and the City's allocation of its budget for informal settlements (About us [sa]). Particularly noteworthy for purposes of this research were the Design Storms that were held in Khayelitsha in which the Coalition played a strategic and organisational role. The Coalition actually partnered with the Partnership as well as other relevant community organisations to engage citizens who wished to participate. The Design Storms were modelled on the idea of a "design hack" (Burnham 2009): "The key objectives for the format of this intervention was to put the power back in people's hands by giving them an opportunity to have their voices heard" (Cassim & M'Rithaa 2015), specifically on two social issues facing the Khayelitsha community, namely waste management (Davis 2012) and early childhood development (Archer 2013). Separate Design Storms were held to address each of these issues.

TLF aims to address social change and social inclusion in the city of Pretoria, with a view "towards a policy environment that would enable social attachment and human rights protection" (Tshwane Leadership Foundation 2016). It emerged in 2003 as a response to Pretoria Community Ministries' (PCM) need to become more proactive to respond to challenges in the city. The PCM was established in 1993 as a trust between six inner-city churches and developed into a "multi-faceted movement" from which TLF was created in 2003 to support and facilitate programmes in the inner city. Although TLF operates as a Christian faith-based organisation, it uses universal guiding principles of tolerance and unity to work towards making the city a safe and welcoming space for all inhabitants, irrespective of age, race and religion. Its primary partners are churches and communities, but they also collaborate with educational institutions for community engagement. My choice to invite this particular organisation as a research participant was informed by TLF's

annual Feast of the Clowns event that I had participated in as a citizen, prior to beginning with this study.

The Feast of the Clowns, hosted in conjunction with the City of Tshwane,¹⁰ is a festival committed to community building, social cohesion and awareness raising for social concerns, through the arts, play and celebration. It started off in 2000 as a street festival and has since grown steadily to become an annual festival focused on social justice issues. The name of the Feast draws on the olden-day European practice where jesters would appear before the royal court to expose social ills. The jester was able to do so without fear of being prosecuted because unlike other citizens, the jester's guise is what allowed him to oppose the monarchy. In this way, the ruler's importance was rivalled by the jester's importance, thereby reversing the order of social status (Feast of the Clowns 2016). Likewise, during the Feast of the Clowns, interventions that are facilitated focus on a particular social justice each year, and communities come together to raise awareness and to try to initiate immediate change through communal activity and conversations. For example, the theme of the 2013 Feast was "It's up to us". This theme was quite broad, addressing issues such as gender violence, children's rights, city greening, refugees and xenophobia, homelessness and housing, as well as HIV/AIDS. The theme emphasises accountability and aptly connotes a sense of agency that citizens need to display when addressing such topical issues.

These three organisations were approached in 2015 to participate in the research, and once consent was received from them, they were used to identify the initial sample of research participants. Owing to their affiliation with the different organisations, each of the research participants brought a different perspective on design interventions and their civic engagement to the table. This ensured that I could cover the substantive area of study sufficiently without sacrificing or excluding any viewpoints on experience and expertise. Moreover, I could grapple with multiple perspectives on authority (and by extension try to make sense of both empowerment and emancipation). The reason for this was because of the different organisational dynamics in each of the organisations. For example, whereas the Partnership and TLF partner with their respective municipalities for projects, the Coalition openly dissents from the viewpoint of the other two organisations.

Since a grounded theory is grounded in the view of the research participants, my research questions dictated that the research sample includes citizens who have experienced the phenomenon in

¹⁰ The City of Tshwane refers to the Metropolitan Municipality in the north of the Gauteng province in South Africa. This municipality serves the city of Pretoria and other surrounding areas.

different capacities and under different circumstances. This meant that my sample would comprise both participants and facilitators of design interventions; two interview schedules were therefore designed at the onset of the research. The interview schedules served two purposes. Firstly, they provided a guide to undertake a grounded theory study (as a first-time grounded theorist) and secondly, they were needed to meet the requirements of the University of Pretoria's ethics application process. The two interview schedules comprised a preliminary list of facilitators and participants who are/were linked to a design intervention by one of the three NGOs, as well as a list of semi-structured questions for both groups of participants; these questions were informed by sensitising concepts that arose from the initial literature used to initiate this study. According to Charmaz (2014a:30), "[s]ensitizing concepts give researchers initial but tentative ideas to pursue and questions to raise about their topics".

The two interview schedules were submitted to the University's research ethics committee as part of my research proposal submission. Individual participants were then recruited and secured via online correspondence once the ethics approval was granted. I set up a dedicated e-mail address (designcitizenship@gmail.com) so that I could house all PhD-related correspondence in the same location. The e-mails that were sent from this account began with an introduction to my professional and research affiliation to provide context for the prospective participant. I also wanted to be forthcoming and transparent with information from the onset so that the participants would feel that they have an equal opportunity to engage with me. The background information was followed by a brief overview of the research topic and the aim of the study. Next, I provided substantiation for extending the invitation to the participant and this was followed by an explanation of the nature of the proposed participation. Participants were also directed to the consent form that was attached to the e-mail for additional information about the research and intended engagement.

The consent form is generally regarded as the cornerstone of gaining access to data. For any research undertaking where human subjects are involved, it is essential to get their consent before interviewing them. This ethical practice of obtaining consent is not only bound by institutional research requirements, but also from a moral and professional point of view it was vital to maintain the protection of the participants. Therefore, participation was on a voluntary basis and no participant was forced to speak to me against his or her will. Participants also had the option to decline to answer any questions that they felt might pose a risk. In addition, they were informed in the consent letter that they were free to withdraw consent and terminate their involvement at any time should they choose to. In order to give the participants an increased sense of agency, the

consent form asked participants whether their name and other identifying details may be included in the study.¹¹ The form also provided participants with an opportunity to decide whether they would like a copy of their interview transcript, information about the research findings and whether they would be willing to be contacted for a possible follow-up interview. The majority of participants responded positively within a few days of receiving the e-mail; many participants also included the signed consent form in their response to my invitation to participate. When no correspondence was received within a week of initiating correspondence, I sent follow-up e-mails.¹²

To ensure the quality and integrity of my research, the ethical considerations of my study were not limited to the research participants. To mitigate bias throughout the grounded theory process, my position as a researcher was not influenced by my academic affiliation and the institutions that provided financial support for my PhD.¹³ The fact that my research topic was self-initiated ensured that my research remained independent and impartial.

With regard to sampling, my initial selection of participants was a purposive sample, also referred to as a selective or non-probability sample. This type of sampling relies on the researcher's judgement to select a sample that they find representative of a population. However, for grounded theory studies, the use of a purposive sample may be contested. The reluctance to use a purposive sample is to avoid imposing any preconceived ideas on the participants and not to force the data generation in a way that is merely convenient for the researcher. Since it was the first time that I was undertaking research on this particular topic, it was essential for me to immerse myself in the research participants' world, by listening to their direct accounts of experiences with design interventions. Furthermore, initially engaging with a predefined list of participants allowed me to validate and substantiate my proposed research early on in the research process. Despite this strategic decision to begin my research with a purposive sample, I was aware that theoretical sampling would follow the purposive sampling as the concurrent data generation and data analysis progressed. Charmaz (2014a:197) articulates the chronological purpose of these two samples very clearly: "Initial sampling in grounded theory gets you started; theoretical sampling guides where you go".

¹¹ Since the research participants consented to have their identity made known, anonymity was not necessary; hence, the names of the research participants are not replaced by codes or pseudonyms and each participant is duly acknowledged when quoted in this thesis.

¹² See appendices 1 and 2 for examples of the recruitment e-mail and consent form shared with the research participants.

¹³ My research was supported by funding from the Andrew W Mellon Foundation as part of the Visual Technologies project at the Department of Visual Arts, University of Pretoria, South Africa. In addition, funding from a Thuthuka grant, by South Africa's National Research Foundation (NRF), and the Vice-Chancellor's academic development grant (University of Pretoria) were used to support my doctoral research.

Theoretical sampling is unique to grounded theory and is used to make the research process emergent. The original definition of theoretical sampling, offered by Glaser and Strauss (1967:45), states: “the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges”. Charmaz (2014a:192) shares this viewpoint, and adds that “[t]heoretical sampling brings explicit systematic checks and refinements” to the grounded theorising process. To this end, theoretical sampling employs an abductive mode of reasoning; it allows the researcher to predict and reason where and how to find additional data and it allows the researcher to attend to variations in the data in an empirically sound way.

Once participants from the initial sample were interviewed and categories began to emerge from the data, theoretical sampling began to direct the data generation and was based on the emerging data, as well as prospective participant suggestions made by some of the research participants from my initial sample. Theoretical sampling allowed me to sample across substantive areas (Charmaz 2014a:213). For example, theoretical sampling extended my study’s sample profile during the research process beyond the facilitators and the participants of design interventions to include government officials as well as corporate stakeholders involved either directly or indirectly with the design interventions. Additional participants were therefore sampled from both the public and the private sector in Pretoria and Cape Town. A second Pretoria initiative, the Cool Capital Biennale, was also added to my sample to represent both cities adequately and to facilitate a more balanced comparative analysis.

Pretoria architect and president of the Pretoria Institute of Architecture, Pieter Matthews, initiated the Cool Capital Biennale (henceforth Cool Capital) in 2014. The idea came after participating in the Venice Biennale in 2012 where participants were encouraged to traverse national boundaries and inject the same creative energy when back home in their respective cities (De Beer 2014). With Cool Capital, Matthews aimed to encourage Pretoria’s creative industry to participate, but it was not restricted to this so-called creative class. Matthew’s intention was to open up Cool Capital to all citizens and hence it was promoted as the “the world’s first uncurated, DIY, guerrilla biennale: a place for the citizens of the Capital City to collectively contemplate and express why we love our city, and how we can improve it” (Cool Capital 2016). Cool Capital calls for citizens to propose creative interventions and projects; art installations, design activism interventions, school projects, environmental art and sculpture are just some of the projects on which Cool Capital is centred. To date, there have been two Cool Capitals, the first in 2014 and the most recent one in 2016. Despite

theoretical sampling driving the inclusion of an additional Pretoria initiative, it was Cool Capital's inclusion of design activism as a core project and the fact that it aims to incite positive urban and social change in the city of Pretoria that drove my decision to include Cool Capital affiliates in my sample. While political or commercial interests were not the driving force behind the vision of this initiative it is noteworthy that, on an operational level, Cool Capital worked with the City of Tshwane and stakeholders from the private sector to get access to space in the city.

Ultimately, the additional research participants provided my research with a varied sample that allowed for multiple sources of data. However, this made it necessary for me to secure additional ethical clearance from the University in the second half of 2016. The ethical implications of this process were to revise the letter of informed consent to include the two new categories of research participants and to submit a letter from the Cool Capital project coordinator accepting my invitation to participate in the study. Once consent was received, participants were recruited via e-mail in accordance with the process that was used for the initial sample.

Since the need for additional theoretical information in a grounded theory stems from the emergent nature of the methodology in order to elaborate on and refine the main categories that emerge from the data, the size of the sample in a grounded theory study depends on the nature of the research topic and the quality of the data that are generated, as opposed to other qualitative research methodologies where the sample size is decided at the beginning of the study. In order for me to generate the substantive grounded theory about design citizenship for this thesis, 24 interviews were needed to reach theoretical saturation but 31 interviews were completed in total.¹⁴ Theoretical saturation, one of the fundamental components of a grounded theory study, is expounded in section 3.4 on "generating and articulating a substantive theory".

3.2.3 Intensive interviewing

Although there are many different types of interviews that can be conducted for data generation in a qualitative study, Charmaz (2014a:85) asserts that intensive interviewing is particularly suited to grounded theory. She supports this viewpoint by drawing parallels between intensive interviewing and grounded theory, and arrives at the following shared similarities: "[b]oth grounded theory methods and intensive interviewing are open-ended yet directed, shaped yet emergent, and paced

¹⁴ See Appendix 3 for the research sample frame, which lists all the research participants as well as the date and location of their interviews.

yet unrestricted” (Charmaz 2014a:85). Accordingly, I used intensive interviewing as a research method to generate the rich data for my research.

All 31 of my intensive interviews were carried out with my sample of research participants between April 2015 and October 2016. In line with Charmaz’s (2014a:59) advice “to be current about the experience or situation that you will be studying”, I prepared for the interviews by becoming familiar with the vision and work of the respective organisations whose design interventions I was exploring. I did this by consulting their websites and other available documents that contained information about the organisations. This information assisted me in being more fluent with the research participants and also allowed me to interpret the information contextually that was generated in the interview.

I conducted the first three interviews in Cape Town using the semi-structured questions that were part of the initial interview schedule. However, after these first few interviews, the shortcomings of doing a semi-structured interview for a constructivist grounded theory study became evident. As a result, I decided to abandon the list of interview questions in favour of an open-ended interview.¹⁵ This meant that from the fourth interview onwards, I asked the research participant the main research question of the study and then allowed them to set the pace of the interview. However, before delving into the interview itself, I introduced myself, contextualised my research position, and situated my research topic. Likewise, the research participants had an opportunity to present themselves. A conversational tone was adopted from the beginning of each interview in order to make the participants comfortable and to be able to engage with them on an equal footing. In keeping with my application of a constructivist grounded theory methodology, it was necessary to maintain an “equal sharing of power” between the researcher and the participant (Birks & Mills 2015:57). This informal, introductory approach to the interview helped me to develop rapport with each participant. It also endorsed the notion that the interview is a conversation and a collaboration rather than one-way communication, thus allowing for a seamless transition to the rest of the interview, which could then be built on trust.

Subsequent to posing my study’s main research question, I directed the interview questions based on participants’ experiences with a design intervention. The intention of this approach was for the participants to steer the conversation by their experience. I took Charmaz’s (2014a:91) advice of

¹⁵ A meeting with Professor Zoran Mitrovic, on 17 April 2015 (at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology), also motivated the decision to keep the subsequent interviews open-ended. In turn, the use of open-ended interviews did not necessitate a pilot study to test the research instrument.

asking questions “slowly to foster the participant’s reflections”. My task was to try to probe and extract clarity and detail from the participants in a way that did not hinder the rhythm of their responses. The fact that participants did not always take the lead in the interview meant that they had to be probed to continue the conversation, and this encouraged me to ask questions. For this, my initial interview schedules came in handy because they provided me with some questions to ask as a conversational strategy without steering away from the participants’ experiences with a design intervention. This helped to open up the inquiry, but did not limit or hinder it because of the open-ended approach that was adopted. Despite some participants needing to be probed more than others, they did not express any reservations on being interviewed. When questions were posed to me, the questions stemmed from their curiosity about my research and they wanted to know what I was going to do with the findings of this study.

As the study progressed from interviewing participants from the purposive sample to interviewing participants generated from the theoretical sample, the nature of my interview questions became more focused. I continued to ask the main research question first, but the subsequent interview questions were aimed at filling the gaps that were identified through my data analysis. Often, these questions were ones that were raised during earlier interviews. In general, I remained mindful of the fact that the purpose of a grounded theory methodology is not merely to generate and use data for explanatory purposes; instead, the intention is to move the research process towards the formulation of conceptual categories. Therefore, it became more important to focus questions once the core concepts and categories of my theory were identified and developed.

I undertook all the intensive interviews personally since I was the primary researcher. The immediate point of contact with each research participant was valuable for the study; by coming face to face with my research participants, I could generate data with them and not merely collect data. A total of 23 (out of 31) intensive interviews were conducted in person, but, owing to logistics, I had to rely on using mobile technology to connect with the remaining participants. Since I am based in Pretoria, I could not always meet participants where they were located. For example, one of my research participants, Marcela Guerrero Casas, was in Bogota, Colombia, at the time of our interview so the interview was conducted using Skype. When such circumstances necessitated it, interviews were conducted over Skype, but it should be mentioned that under these circumstances, the participants were all willing to use mobile technology as an alternate form of communication.

When I was able to meet research participants in person, the location of the interview was negotiated with each of them. The setting of the interview was therefore a space that the participant was familiar with and as a result, comfortable too; this space was in most instances their workspace. The participant's privacy was ensured for the duration of the interview by sitting in a closed office space or a separate room, such as a boardroom, where no other colleagues were present or could hear what occurred during the interview. All participants provided consent for me to record our conversation; their permission was noted in writing (in the letter of consent) and was reiterated verbally at the onset of the interview.

Whether conducted in person or over Skype, all interviews save one were conducted as individual interviews. The only group interview was scheduled to accommodate a group of participants from Khayelitsha who could only see me during office hours at the Coalition's premises. Therefore, it was their decision to speak to me as a group. I did not have an official interpreter present so the group interview format actually proved to be beneficial; being with their own community members made the group dynamic between the participants less threatening and allowed them to speak up and share their feelings and experiences with me without hesitation.

Time and funding were two other practical considerations that had to be managed for conducting the intensive interviews. These two considerations had to be managed in a way that was convenient and appropriate for both me and the research participants. Firstly, with regard to time, the participants were informed (in my electronic invitation to participate) that I would need approximately an hour of their time. The actual interviews ranged from 30 to 60 minutes. Secondly, the costs involved to travel to Cape Town demanded that I try to conduct as many interviews as possible with Cape Town-based participants during my visits. This posed a challenge in the sense that I was unable to transcribe all the interviews immediately. Nonetheless, after each interview field notes were made; listening to the audio files of the interview expedited the recording of the field notes and the writing of case-based memos. The interview transcripts served as rich, raw data for the research. Hence, once the interviews were transcribed, a more detailed analysis of the interviews followed to ensure that nothing was left unexplored.

I transcribed the first 11 interviews but owing to time constraints, professional service was sought for the subsequent transcriptions. Once the transcripts were received from the service provider, I listened to the audio recordings of the interviews again in order to ensure that the transcripts were an accurate reflection of the conversation. This was used as a measure to eliminate any bias and to

ensure that the authenticity of the participants' accounts of their design activism experience was maintained in the written translation of the intensive interviews. To use Charmaz's (2014a:58) words, this process allowed me to "explore nuances of meaning and process that hired hands might [have] easily miss[ed]".

3.3 Data analysis

Essentially, the data analysis process for my constructivist grounded theory study comprised three coding stages, namely initial coding, focused coding and theoretical (or advanced) coding; while the two former coding stages are discussed chronologically when discussing the grounded theory process, the latter is inextricably linked to the final step of articulating the substantive theory. Overall, these three stages are typical of Charmaz's variant of constructivist grounded theory where the intention is to move the emerging theory from a descriptive to a conceptual level. To work towards generating my substantive theory of design citizenship, memo writing and perusal of other documents supported the data analysis process. Each data analysis method that I used is explicated below to indicate how I arrived at the substantive theory in this thesis.

3.3.1 Initial coding

Initial coding, as its name suggests, initiates the data analysis process of a grounded theory study by generating codes inductively from the data that have been produced. Birks and Mills (2015:89) define codes as "a form of shorthand that researchers repeatedly use to identify conceptual reoccurrences and similarities in the patterns in the data". Since the data analysis process runs concurrently with the data generation in a grounded theory study, I began with the initial coding process shortly after I conducted my first interview.

I started the coding process by identifying words in the rich, narrative data (that is, the interview transcripts) and labelling them to explain what was happening in the data. Essentially, these labels served as the initial codes to describe participants' feelings as well as their accounts of what happened during a design intervention. This so-called labelling activity during the initial coding stage of the research highlights the constructivist nature of my study in that "no researcher is neutral because language confers form and meaning on observed realities" (Charmaz 2014a:114). The constructivist underpinning of my study also had a pragmatic implication for my data analysis process; it encouraged me to question and examine hidden assumptions in my codes, as well as in the language that was used by the research participants to share their intervention experiences with

me. In turn, questioning my data and codes allowed me to interrogate my research decisions and therefore facilitated reflexivity.

The initial coding stage provided a springboard to raise methodological and theoretical questions that would help me to better understand the substantive area that I was studying. I followed Charmaz's (2014a) initial coding strategy to arrive at an analytic skeleton or framework that would be developed as the fieldwork progressed. According to Charmaz (2014a:113), "[b]y carefully attending to coding, you begin weaving two major threads in the fabric of grounded theory: generalizable theoretical statements that transcend specific times and places and contextual analyses of actions and events". I was mindful of these two overarching threads while coding, and therefore moved back and forth from the general to the specific to explore the interface between the social processes of design activism and citizenship.

I carried out my coding manually by moving line by line through each interview transcript, labelling each line of the narrative data; hardcopies of the transcripts were used and codes and other notes were handwritten in the margins. In some instances, I also listened to the interview recordings again to ensure that I did not miss any important nuances in the participant's tone as they explained their experiences. This method opened up my data analysis beyond generalised observations. As such, line-by-line coding proved very useful to facilitate a process of analytic discovery because it allowed me to dig deep into the rich data, and also allowed easy access to information when I revisited the transcripts for clarity and/or comparison. Furthermore, the line-by-line coding was valuable as it allowed me to identify gaps in the data. It should be noted that while Birks and Mills (2015:98) recognise that it has become common for grounded theorists to use coding software, I decided against using software even "as an adjunct tool rather than an analytical solution". My reason for this decision was twofold. Firstly, I did not want to compromise the reliability of my coding. Secondly, I wanted to align my research practices with the principles of social constructivist grounded theory as detailed in Chapter Two. In particular, I share Charmaz's (2014a:120) "stance on the theoretical plausibility of data" where "grounded theorists aim to code for possibilities suggested *by* the data rather than ensuring complete accuracy *of* the data". My manual process did not compromise accuracy of my codes, but in fact it served as a measure for more analytical accuracy by remaining closer to the data. This standpoint of exploring possibilities rather than merely focusing on a fixed solution resonates with my professional position as a designer because I am of the opinion that wicked or complex design problems cannot be converted into well-defined problems. Instead, as a designer, I am mindful of "satisficing"; the term "satisficing" was coined by

Cross (2006:81) as a way to explain a designer's process of finding satisfactory and appropriate solutions as opposed to striving for an optimal solution.

The nature of my data analysis process was a very active one. It required me to "enter an interactive [analytical] space" (Charmaz 2014a:115) through a close reading and a constant comparison of my data. Since it was the first time that I was using a grounded theory methodology, the following list of questions, proposed by Birks and Mills (2015:93), was used as a guide to help me question my data during the initial coding phase:

- Are there elements of process or action apparent in the early analysis?
- What is left unsaid in the data analysis to date?
- Are there more questions than answers? If so, what are they?
- Who are the key stakeholders in the field?
- Where else do I need to get more data? What should data consist of?

The codes I used were kept simple, direct and as close to the data as possible. I steered away from using themes that emerged from the data as codes; instead, I used action words, otherwise known as gerunds. Charmaz (2014a:120) advocates the use of gerunds for coding as she believes that researchers "gain a strong sense of action and sequence" with them. For example, the gerund "performing" denotes more action than its noun form, "performer", and also allow the researcher to grapple more effectively with implicit meanings in the data. The excerpt from an interview transcript in Table 5 provides an example of my initial line-by-line coding. Where necessary, *in vivo* codes were also used; these codes "refer to codes of participants' special terms" and "serve as symbolic markers of participants' speech and meanings" (Charmaz 2014a:134). The use of these verbatim terms is another way in which I carefully considered the language used by the research participants.

At the beginning of the initial coding process, many of my codes seemed to allude to the same actions and/or experiences. However, the codes were viewed separately before being grouped together to form categories. Categories are defined by Birks and Mills (2015:89) as "[g]roups of codes representing a higher-level concept". The reason for not hastening towards category formation was to maintain openness, a defining characteristic of a grounded theory process. It also allowed me to explore all the possible theoretical directions that emerged from the data (Charmaz 2014a:114), because codes could be compared with codes and incidents could be compared with incidents to explain any variation in the rich data. The word "incidents" is "an umbrella term for recurring actions, characteristics, experiences, phrases, explanations, images and/or sounds" found in the data (Birks & Mills 2015:89). To avoid imposing any preconceived categories on the data, I also tried not to read any literature during the coding process, which might have coloured my reading of

the data. Nonetheless, it was my initial review of design activism and citizenship literature (covered in Chapter One) that provided me with social justice-related sensitising concepts to consider and begin coding my data.

EXAMPLE OF LINE-BY-LINE CODING FROM AN EXCERPT OF AN INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT		
F:	And in terms of the participants? Did you notice for example any positive changes since the intervention? Or negative changes? What were some of the observations?	
B:	Well, I think that part of design thinking is this asset-based approach.	Giving design thinking value
F:	Yes	
B:	Where you're harvesting all the good things that are often lying in. And I always remember a significant point with the Doornbach project for example was where we were feeding back to the community the photographs that we'd taken and, erm, you know there were a lot of photographs of the dire nature of the flooding in the streets and the lack of sanitation and all those issues. But also photographs of various little houses and gardens that had been fixed up and beautified and vegetables were growing and flowers were growing and people had painted their front stoeps and that sort of thing. Those photographs were really quite key in encouraging the participants from the community to speak, and to identify, they were trying to identify whose houses they were and they were sharing anecdotes and stories with one another and that grabbed their attention way more than the issues of poverty and flooding and poor sanitation. And out of that came some ideas that we were able to then put forward, you know, the possibility of running a competition, you know, sort of a home beautification competition, using photography worked maybe as well as a medium to show the results of that...	Harvesting ideas (designers) Working from existing resources Reciprocating and maintaining contact with communities Using visual communication to discuss difficult issues Creating beautiful spaces Experiencing change Working with existing spaces Using creative skills for upliftment Facilitating communication Sharing through stories Engaging each other through biblio-play Reliving personal experiences Focusing on strengths Finding solutions together Creating incentives for behaviour change Seeing photography as a positive tool for engagement

Table 5: Example of line-by-line coding.

A broad analytical narrative that comprised a broad range of codes, leaning towards clear categorisation, began to take shape through my initial coding process. The line-by-line coding was advantageous as it allowed me to move towards Charmaz's (2014a:133) criteria of fit and relevance; fit in that I was directly immersed in the empirical world through my rich data, and relevance because I was moving towards a coherent analytical framework for my substantive theory of design citizenship. Naturally then, my emerging narrative from the initial codes led to the application of the

focused coding method, the second data analysis method used for my research. Even though I refer to focused coding as the second data analysis method, I need to reiterate that the data analysis process in a grounded theory study is cyclical, and therefore, in practice, I alternated between the different types of coding as required by the emerging theory.

3.3.2 Focused coding

While initial coding is meant to take the data apart and look closely at its constituencies, focused coding brings the information together in a conceptual and more abstract manner (Birks & Mills 2015:12). Thus, the focused coding phase of my data analysis process moved my research beyond a thematic analysis and description of the data towards theoretical integration. Charmaz (2014a) uses the term 'focused coding', but it is akin to the intermediate coding phase found in both Glaser's and Strauss and Corbin's variants of grounded theory. In terms of my constructivist method of focused coding, I grouped prominent and recurring initial codes into focused codes, which served to abstract common themes and explain analytical concepts. To echo Charmaz (2014a:141), "[f]or most of my analyses, focused coding simply meant using certain initial codes that had more theoretical reach, direction and centrality and treating them as the core of my nascent analysis". Generally, the focused codes that I assigned to group comparable, initial codes were new words. Through the analysis process I found that new words had better explanatory power and allowed me to place the emerging concepts in the context of my units of analysis, namely design interventions. The new words also helped to name my emerging categories and sub-categories and articulate the multi-dimensional nature of design citizenship.

Thereafter, I tested the focused codes against the rich data, which assisted me in arriving at the tentative categories necessary for purposes of theoretical integration. Owing to the iterative nature of the data analysis process, the categories that were explored during the focused coding phase were tentative; they guided me but did not bind me (Charmaz 2014a:144). Likewise, the recurring initial codes that I identified did not automatically imply the creation of focused codes, but owing to their shared characteristics they warranted a further exploration and comparison before being subsumed into a category. Memos aided the categorisation process; since they are also a key component of a grounded theory study, they warrant their own subheading and are discussed below.

How a researcher subsumes initial codes into a focused code is based on the analytical sense that the codes make (Charmaz 2014a:138). My substantive area of enquiry was therefore kept in mind to

allow analytical depth and not to deviate from the phenomenon under study. The analytic sense and depth of my focused codes led to the production of the core categories, which finally allowed me to raise the core categories to theoretical concepts. The concepts evolved into my theoretical framework for design citizenship, comprising four overarching elements: people, places, processes and phenomenon. The people and places, together making up the context of design citizenship, are represented through the concept of 'plugging in'. The concepts 'awakening awareness', 'igniting agency' and 'sustaining a design thinking impetus' are representative of the processes of design citizenship, while 'drip-feeding design investments', 'seeing the bigger picture' and 'moving from enragement to critical engagement' are the concepts that represent the social phenomenon under study. For purposes of this thesis, the interaction of these theoretical concepts is what eventually shapes the substantive theory of design citizenship.

3.3.3 Constant comparative analysis

Constant comparison, another defining characteristic of a grounded theory study, makes the research process iterative in that data collection and data analysis happen concurrently. From the onset of a study, the researcher undertakes constant comparative analysis by comparing initial codes with initial codes. Subsequently, focused coding ensues by comparing focused codes with focused codes, focused codes with future codes and tentative categories with tentative categories to move closer to the theoretical codes and core categories of my theory. The constant comparative analysis was very valuable in that it made it possible for me to identify gaps in the data and consequently, facilitated theoretical sampling. The need to recruit two more groups of stakeholders to be interviewed is an example of the advantage of approaching my data with a comparative mindset.

Unlike my initial coding that primarily applied inductive logic to make sense of the data, my method of constant comparative analysis was driven by an abductive logic, particularly during the focused coding stage. Abduction allowed me to explore all plausible interpretations of my data in order to make conceptual leaps for the tentative categories that informed the conceptual framework that was emerging. This process was aided by the use of diagramming. Diagramming served as a "generative tool" (Buckley & Waring 2013:149) for my data analysis and assisted with the identification and development of my codes and categories. Methodologically speaking, Charmaz (2014a) supports diagramming as an activity that facilitates the theoretical development of one's analysis. Buckley and Waring (2013:154) also present a compelling argument for the use of

diagramming; they believe that “diagrams can go some way into transcending potential epistemological boundaries associated with the various interpretations” of grounded theory. As a communication designer, “representing” (Lawson 2006) or “drawing” (Dorst 2003) is a central part of the design process so diagramming came naturally to me as a design researcher. I needed to use diagrams in order to make sense of the theoretical complexity of my data. To this end, diagrams facilitated a dialogue between myself and the emerging codes and categories from the rich data that were generated. This action resonates with Schön’s (1983) belief that designers engage with their representations in a conversational manner. I have argued elsewhere that “[o]wing to the wicked nature of design problems ... dialogue assists in structuring the design problem through solution attempts” (Cassim 2010:52). From my experience with this grounded theory study, I feel confident to extend this argument of the use and value of diagrams to a grounded theory study as a communication tool to aid the analytical process by structuring the emergent theory through theoretical attempts.

Essentially, diagrams gave form to my emerging theoretical and conceptual ideas. Early on in the data analysis process, my codes took the form of spider diagrams that relate to “clustering”, a term used by Charmaz (2014a:184) to describe the technique of making mental notes visible. Clustering provided me with diagrams that helped to make sense of my data because the logic of clustering is premised on exploring relationships between codes and/or categories. For example, central codes or categories are circled and serve as a nucleus in a diagram. This major circle is then linked to smaller circles or properties using connecting lines. This graphic abstraction of my data activated the abstraction of the theoretical concepts and helped me to distil categories from the focused codes. Clustering also created a bridge for me to arrive at the memoing process since it gave me “a preliminary sketch of the memo” that I would need to write (Charmaz 2014a:185). Later, my diagrams developed into relational representations to visualise the relationship between categories, and also to clarify my methodological process. Hence, Nelson and Stolterman’s (2012:135) view of the design communication process as “sequentially emergent” applies to my grounded theory process where my diagrams became sequentially emergent to articulate my substantive theory.

Since the researcher does not operate in isolation during a grounded theory study, diagramming served another purpose: it enabled shared understanding of my emerging theory with my research supervisors because the diagrams started to make my theory visible and therefore more accessible. Nevertheless, my diagrams are a means of transparency for my research, thereby supporting the social justice underpinning of my constructivist study. Diagrams also provided “an internal check on

personal understanding” and helped to “reduce some of the potential biases” (Buckley & Waring 2013:151,169) that I may have brought to the research from my prior experience and knowledge of the fields of design activism and citizenship. This ‘designerly’ approach of bringing my abductive thinking and representing skills to my focused coding process enabled me to traverse design practice and design research in a seamless manner, and foregrounded the importance of communication not only for design practice, but also for design research.

3.3.4 Memo writing

All seminal grounded theorists (irrespective of their methodological variations) support the mandatory use of memos as they facilitate transparency because the researcher notes down experiences, interactions and insights. Fittingly, Birks and Mills (2015:11) refer to memos as “written records of a researcher’s thinking”. I therefore began the memo-writing process after initial data were generated during the first interview. Charmaz (2014a) notes that memos are not restricted to one phase of the research process, but continue until the substantive theory has been formulated. Similarly, my memos developed from being fairly descriptive and tentative to being highly analytical and more concrete as my data analysis process advanced from the initial coding phase to the focused and theoretical coding phases. It was necessary to return to the field and check the inferences that I was making in the memos, and this resulted in a steady stream of case-based and conceptual memos, as distinguished by Sbaraini, Carter, Wendell Evans and Blinkhorn (2011).

Case-based memos denote memos that were written after data generation; they included my reflections on pertinent ideas and actions that emerged from the retelling of participant experiences, as well as questions to consider and ask the data. My case-based memos also included methodologically-related information. This approach is in keeping with Charmaz’s (2014a:165) recommendation to keep a methodological journal to help articulate one’s grounded theory process. Birks and Mills (2015:47) are of the same opinion; they regard memos as a measure of quality control in a grounded theory study because they reflect the researcher’s “methodological congruence and procedural precision” (Birks & Mills 2015:47). In contrast, my conceptual/comparative memos were written after data analysis. These memos are less descriptive and more analytical than case-based memos. Conceptual memos served as a fine-tuning mechanism and facilitated a distillation process to transform my data into theory (Lempert 2007); they assisted me in comparing the emerging codes and categories and subsequently raising focused codes to conceptual categories. Once the core, conceptual categories were identified, the memos aided me in elucidating the properties and dimensions of my categories and also helped to raise theoretical

sensitivity, which Birks and Mills (2015:58) define as “the ability to recognize and extract from the data elements that have relevance for your emerging theory”. Theoretical sensitivity entails being mindful of personal insights and insights relating to the research topic and resonates with the radical humanist paradigm that has informed my research.

In terms of format, the conceptual and case-based memos were generally produced electronically whereas the immediate field notes were mostly handwritten.¹⁶ Overall, the reflective nature of my memos influenced their casual register as opposed to an objective, academic one. Charmaz (2014a:165) calls this approach “free writing” since the memos are essentially notes for “personal use rather than public consumption”. Hence, both types of memos that I used facilitated an ongoing reflective conversation between the emerging theory and me, the researcher. The memos were kept open, or “active” as Birks and Mills (2015:43) describe, and as new theoretical insights emerged as the data analysis advanced, additional comments were added for purposes of elaboration or clarification. The raw data generated during the fieldwork were often included in my memos. This inclusion served two purposes. Firstly, the raw data allowed me to illustrate the analytical claims that I was making by retaining and respecting the research participants’ voices. Secondly, the raw data provided me with easier access to the empirical evidence and validated the *in vivo* codes that I used. This iterative process of memo-writing highlights its spontaneous nature, and recognises that the needs of my memos were driven by theoretical insights from the data.

3.4 Generating and articulating a substantive theory

Charmaz (2014a) is of the opinion that initial and focused coding is often adequate. However, an advanced, theoretical coding phase was carried out in my study to move my analytic story towards theoretical integration. As there are different variants of the grounded theory methodology, there are different conceptions of what a theory is; likewise, these definitions highlight objectivist and constructivist differences.

Since I have used a constructivist grounded theory methodology, I was mindful of my theory being articulated in an abstract and conceptual manner and not just as an explanatory scheme. My aim was therefore to move my theory “beyond individual situations and immediate interactions to include collectivities and institutions” (Charmaz 2014a:233). This interpretive grounded theorising was facilitated by the aforementioned methods and culminated through a process of “advanced analytical strategies” of saturating and sorting theoretical categories and raising the “analysis to the

¹⁶ See appendices 4 and 5 for examples of a case-based memo and a conceptual/comparative memo, respectively.

highest conceptual level possible (Birks & Mills 2015:109). To this end, the explanation of my theory is presented in this thesis using a storyline. Birks and Mills (2015:114) identify four guiding principles for a storyline through the use of “TALES” as a mnemonic. Each of the five guiding principles is used as individual sub-headings below and elaborated on with an explanation of how I attended to each principle when generating my theory.

- **“Theory takes precedence”**

To move my theory beyond description to foreground its constructivist nature, I first identified major and minor categories. Thereafter, I ordered the categories according to their logic and then raised them to concepts. Charmaz (2014a:342) defines concepts as “analytical conceptualizations that form the components of the developed grounded theory ... [they] are abstract ideas that account for the data and have specifiable properties and boundaries”.

- **“Allows for variation”**

I did not avoid variation, which helped add depth to my theory. Instead, I attended to emerging actions and experiences that were not consistent with the emerging theory by looking at experiences and actions at large and “not on individuals per se” (Charmaz 2014a:207). This was done through a process of theoretical sampling to allow for robust and complete categories that accounted for a full range of experience (Charmaz 2014a:206). Memos and diagrams aided this process.

- **“Limits gaps”**

The properties of my categories were saturated with data. Saturation is both a criterion and a strategy in a grounded theory study. Saturation as a strategy is not limited to the advanced stage of the research process and is present from the time that the codes and categories start emerging from the data. However, during this final stage of theorising, saturation effectively becomes a criterion by which to exercise judgement, a “judgement that there is no need to collect further data” (Wiener 2007:306). I was also careful not to mistake repetition of categories for saturation as a means of limiting gaps in my theory. I decided that I had reached theoretical saturation when my narrative accounted for all experiences of the phenomenon, and no new information came to the fore.

- **“Evidence is grounded”**

My storyline was developed from the data, and not independently of it. I examined categories against the data “for their power, purpose, and patterns” (Charmaz 2014a:296). Furthermore, empirical evidence, by way of interview transcript excerpts, was included in my substantive theory to support my theoretical inferences. Charmaz (2006:97) upholds that it is redundant for participants to verify conceptual analysis because the core categories emerged from a constructivist process. Nonetheless, a form of member verification was present in the study by way of the theoretical sampling method.

- **“Style is appropriate”**

With regard to style, grounded theories are rhetorical. Hence, my grounded theory is presented as a story. The final format of my theory was arrived at through a process of sorting and integrating my memos to refine the theoretical links of my theory. I took heed to Charmaz’s (2014a) suggestion to sort out one’s memos by category; this is where the labelling of my memos was an advantage for the theorising process. To enable me to write my theory, I also sorted out the memos in a way that would aid the logical structure and flow of my story. Similar to any story that needs to be coherent for a reader, the explanation of my theory is presented sequentially. This format is also appropriate for the relational and multi-dimensional nature of the categories. I attended carefully to all the categories and their properties and even went as far as explicating the dimensions of the properties, linking them “to the conditions that they operate under” (Birks & Mills 2015:95). For example, time is a recurring dimension for a number of my categories’ properties. Overall, my findings are specific to the context of my fieldwork and therefore cannot be generalised. This essentially supports the nature of a substantive theory (as opposed to a formal theory).

3.5 Summary

This chapter outlined my research design in accordance with research methods that are synonymous with a grounded theory study. More specifically, the constructivist underpinning of my research, detailed in Chapter Two, provided me with a mental and philosophical blueprint for the iterative research process. On a pragmatic level, this blueprint was used as an anchor to explain my decision making when generating and analysing my data. To this end, a general overview of each research method and strategy was provided before establishing their appropriateness and the rigour with which they were applied. The in-depth discussion of the research methods and the key tenets of a grounded theory study provides readers with an indication of the nature and ethical considerations

of my engagement with research participants, my coding processes during different stages in the research process, as well as an implicit timeframe of the study. Furthermore, this detailed research design was presented in prose and supported by numerous visual aids and examples from each phase of the research process to ensure accountability and quality for my substantive grounded theory. This means that the methods elucidated in this chapter provide readers with a measure to validate the findings of my study that follow in a narrative format in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF DESIGN CITIZENSHIP

4.1 Introduction

This chapter applies the grounded theory that was detailed in Chapter Three by presenting my theoretical conceptualisation of design citizenship in a narrative format. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the conceptualisation of the social phenomenon (design citizenship) comprises four overarching elements, namely people, places, processes and phenomenon. Each element is described below:

- *People* – the human actors involved in design interventions;
- *Places* – the space where design interventions take shape and roll out;
- *Processes* – the procedures and flow of citizenship activities (over time and space); and
- *Phenomenon* – the general theoretical statements of design citizenship, constituted out of key concepts and supported by contextual analyses of action.

Because these four elements each begin with the letter P, my theoretical framework of design citizenship is labelled the *Four Ps framework of design citizenship*.¹⁷ This framework accounts for the research participants' experiences, it explains variations in these experiences as told by the participants themselves, and it accounts for the conditions under which design citizenship operates. To this end, the theoretical framework is discussed in three separate sections, using the four Ps as a structural guide for the reader. The first section collectively examines people and places, which make up the context of design citizen, while the second section considers the related processes of design citizenship to make sense of the research participants' actions and experiences with design interventions. Since design citizenship is not an isolated phenomenon and is made visible through the interaction of a multiplicity of key actors, the context and processes of design citizenship scaffold and support the third and concluding section of this chapter, which articulates the phenomenon of design citizenship. To this end, the *Four Ps framework of design citizenship* explains the four Ps through their relationship with one another, and in turn highlights the value of their interaction. In terms of format, the four Ps are explained by way of action concepts, which are grounded in urban experiences of the research participants, and also cover the properties and dimensions of each theoretical concept. A visual representation of the relationship between the four Ps and the structure of the theoretical framework can be seen in Figure 4.

¹⁷ The *Four Ps framework* is used as a structural guide to explain the theory and must not be confused with the Four Ps of the traditional marketing mix, namely price, product, promotion and place.

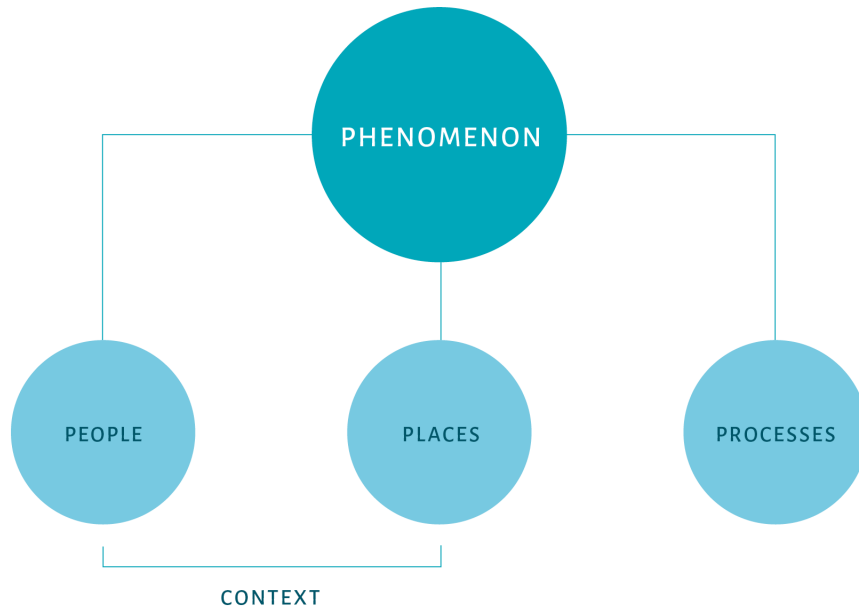


Figure 4: Structure of the *Four Ps framework of design citizenship*.

4.2 People and places of design citizenship

The first two Ps – *people* and *places* – form the context of the phenomenon of design citizenship. Since the context of a phenomenon frames its social and geographic setting, I draw on the act of “problem-framing” (Cross 2011:75; Dorst 2011) to articulate these two constituents of the phenomenon. Cross (2011:75) affirms that it is common practice amongst designers to frame a design task “in a distinctive and sometimes rather personal way”. The earliest use of the term ‘framing’ to engender a better understanding of a design problem has been traced to Donald Schön (1983), whose notion of a “reflective practitioner” has had a seminal influence on design; hence, it is no surprise that the term recurs in contemporary design practice (Cross 2006, 2011; Dorst 2011; Kolko 2010; Lawson 2006; Smith, Vangkilde, Kjaersgaard, Otto, Halse & Binder 2016). Dorst (2011), for example, recognises the act of framing as one of the steps at the onset of a design process. According to him, a frame is best described as a point of view and therefore, the act of framing can be defined as the creation of “a (novel) standpoint from which a problematic situation can be tackled” (Dorst 2011:525). Similarly, the context of the phenomenon provides the viewpoint that informs the resulting theory of the phenomenon of design citizenship.

While framing the people, places and processes of design citizenship in the first part of this chapter, I draw on specific design research methods, namely personas and user journeys, to communicate the abstract and conceptual theoretical ideas visually to a range of readers. These two design methods,

which form part of the discipline of user experience design (referred to as UX design) and interaction design, are tools used in the design process to structure and make visible the findings of the design research process.¹⁸ These visualisation tools are used to generate value for the end user by making complex information accessible to a variety of people involved in a given project (that is, both designers and non-designers).

The communication approach of the two methods – personas and user journeys – take on a distinct visual form and each method serves a different purpose. Similarly, my intention of using these tools is to communicate the theory of design citizenship in a narrative format; the two visualisation tools support the prose presented in this chapter and also serve as a visual summation of the context and processes of design citizenship. In this way, the findings of this study are not limited to academic circles, but have the potential to reach a wider audience. During the fieldwork phase, many research participants were curious and raised queries about my position on the topic and what I intend to do with the research findings. Some of the questions that were posed by the research participants during the open-ended interviews included:

- Marcela:* *Just curious where you take this ... research ... going forward? ... and sort of what your next steps are?*
- Danielle:* *How would you like to play a part in this growing movement?*
- Sune:* *I would like to know how you are going to support what we do and how can we support what you do, and what do you want to do with this?*

In response to the participants, I highlighted my intention to turn the insights from this doctoral research into action, particularly for those working on the ground to facilitate design interventions. Hence, each method is discussed briefly below to substantiate their alignment with the tenets of a substantive grounded theory; furthermore, the descriptions provide a guide for the reader to approach and access the visual communication elements that are included in this chapter.

Personas are defined by Hanington and Martin (2012:132) as “aggregate archetypes” in that they describe “aggregates of behaviour”. Likewise, grounded theory studies try to understand and uncover participants’ actions and experiences. Accordingly, personas are used as part of my research findings to present relatable and meaningful profiles of the people – henceforth referred to as the

¹⁸ Personas and user journeys were first introduced by Alan Cooper in 2004 to synthesise and communicate design research (Hanington & Martin 2012:132).

actors of design citizenship – who enable the phenomenon to occur. While personas have evolved to become fictional in a design research process, the personas that are presented in this thesis are compiled from information collected from the research participants who are not outliers, but who were directly involved in the design interventions, albeit in different personal and professional capacities. The four distinct groups of city actors comprise driven designers, concerned citizens, confident corporates and obstinate (and sometimes obstructive) government officials. The names assigned to each group of actors is meant to suggest the nature of the role that each group of city actors plays in the process of design citizenship, while their personas serve as a representative sample. Hence, the aim of the four personas is not to indicate the demographics of my research population but rather to represent the distinct behaviour patterns and actions of each group of actors. In terms of their format, personas follow a design research tradition; they can be explained by using an analogy of a personal profile on a social media platform in that they generally include a profile photo, a description of the person's background (such as education, personality, geographic location), and lifestyle (such as current interests, motivations). This information is usually presented in both visual and written formats.

The four personas, presented in tables 6 to 9, offer a nuanced overview of the key actors of design citizenship by covering their current as well as aspirational values; hence, the personas give a qualitative face to the rich data and thereby support the substantive information provided in the exposition of the research findings in this chapter. As noted in Chapter Three, substantive information is included by way of excerpts from interviews as well as personal observations as part of the theorising. The reason for the inclusion of lengthy excerpts from my interview transcripts in this chapter is motivated by the aim of constructivist grounded theory to understand a phenomenon and not merely to explain it. As a result, the excerpts offer the reader sufficient context to understand my narrative interpretation within the context of the research theme.

Furthermore, the observations included in the narrative should not be read as interpretations relating to the extant theory; this information is covered in the next chapter. The theory therefore comprises two threads: conceptual theoretical statements and contextual analyses of actions. Following from this, the overarching category to explain the context of design citizenship is the notion of 'plugging in'. This concept is followed by three, related sub-categories, namely 'creating a platform for engagement', 'massaging conversations' and 'aligning values'.



DESIGN PROFESSIONAL: DRIVEN DESIGNER

DESCRIPTOR	
Professionally trained designer who has facilitated and/or participated in design interventions; intrinsically motivated citizen and professional.	
PROFILE	
o	Age: Mid-career professional
o	Background: Tertiary education; discipline-specific professional job
o	Education/Job: Tertiary education and significant work experience in the sector
o	Job: Works from 9-5; has an established network with different city stakeholders
o	Location: Lives in an urban area; usually in close proximity to work
PERSONAL GOALS	
o	To improve business and be successful
o	To implement systems that are beneficial to the organisation
o	To spend money wisely
o	To supervise and manage people working under the representative
o	Wants return on investment
o	To grow a strong industry reputation
o	Believes in offering a good product
o	Wants to leverage disciplinary knowledge to grow business and professional position
BEHAVIOURAL TRENDS, ACTIONS AND/OR MIND-SET	
o	Outlook on design: Understands design as a commercial practice that can add value to business
o	Ambitious and focused
o	Has access to space and resources; yields power and control of resources
o	Has a wide business network
o	Sometimes at odds with government but does not feel the need to engage on a civic level owing to access and control of private space/s

Table 6: Persona: driven designer.



COMMUNITY MEMBER: CONCERNED CITIZEN

DESCRIPTOR	
	Active or passive participant of a design intervention; has had negative experiences with service delivery so generally avoids interventions because of prior experiences.
PROFILE	
	- o Age: 18+ (part of the labour force) - o Background: Grew up in a previously disadvantaged community; needs to work hard to be a stable provider for self and dependents (including extended family); has very little free time; not always comfortable with technology - o Education: Not politically literate or design literate (does not understand the respective jargon) - o Job: Juggling a full-time job and education - o Location: Lives on the outskirts of the city but works in the city; experiences mobility challenges on a day-to-day basis
PERSONAL GOALS	
	- o Motivation: Personal and professional development; wants to connect with other people in person; needs practical information to make life better and easier - o Desire/needs: To have equal rights in the city; to be safe and feel secure socially and financially; more focused on basic needs than desires—such as spending more time with family; value for time - o Experience goals: Wants to feel safe; wants to spend time with family; wants to learn new skills; wants to know what services/resources are available for use to make immediate living and working conditions better - o Underwhelmed by government's lack of support, doesn't know where to turn for assistance; feels concerned and confused; wants trusted information presented by political parties - o To make a difference in the community by being involved and lending a hand; wants to meet new people
BEHAVIOURAL TRENDS, ACTIONS AND/OR MIND-SET	
	- o Outlook on design: Does not understand it; feels misled and has experienced false hope - o Feels despondent about and distrusting of government and big business—lack of trust - o Constraints: Lack of budget, time

Table 7: Persona: concerned citizen.



CORPORATE SPONSOR REPRESENTATIVE: CONFIDENT CORPORATE

DESCRIPTOR	
	The face of big business; runs and/or manages a corporate environment.
PROFILE	
	- o Age: Mid-career professional - o Background: Tertiary education; discipline-specific professional job - o Education/Job: Tertiary education and significant work experience in the sector - o Job: Works from 9-5; has an established network with different city stakeholders - o Location: Lives in an urban area; usually in close proximity to work
PERSONAL GOALS	
	- o To improve business and be successful - o To implement systems that are beneficial to the organisation - o To spend money wisely - o To supervise and manage people working under the representative - o Wants return on investment - o To grow a strong industry reputation - o Believes in offering a good product - o Wants to leverage disciplinary knowledge to grow business and professional position
BEHAVIOURAL TRENDS, ACTIONS AND/OR MIND-SET	
	- o Outlook on design: Understands design as a commercial practice that can add value to business - o Ambitious and focused - o Has access to space and resources; yields power and control of resources - o Has a wide business network - o Sometimes at odds with government but does not feel the need to engage on a civic level owing to access and control of private space/s

Table 8: Persona: confident corporate.



**GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL:
OBSTINATE – SOMETIMES OBSTRUCTIVE – OFFICIAL**

DESCRIPTOR	
Works for a government department; wants to get the job done but is bound by senior authorities who aren't always supportive.	
PROFILE	
- o Age: Mid-career professional - o Location: Based close to the city; in an office job - o Education/Job: Tertiary education and work experience in/with the government - o Background: Access to education and financial security - o Experience: Has travelled nationally and internationally for work purposes; has a broad worldview	
PERSONAL GOALS	
- o Wants to get more personal exposure - o Wants to tick boxes and just get the job done for work's sake - o Wants to maintain lifestyle by keeping a well-paid job - o Wants to live a comfortable life	
BEHAVIOURAL TRENDS, ACTIONS AND/OR MIND-SET	
- o Outlook on design: Does not understand the purpose or role of design, both commercially or socially - o Sceptical of designer's ego; generally, wants to be in control and wants to push own position - o Doesn't always engage with the community - o Operates in a silo just to get the job done without considering the broad-scale implications of actions	

Table 9: Persona: obstinate (government) official.

4.2.1 Plugging in

The context of design citizenship is described by the overarching category labelled ‘plugging in’,¹⁹ which effectively refers to the four city actors getting connected and involved with design interventions. While the overarching action of plugging in does not exclude other actors, the focus in this combined section on context (people and places) is on the actions of the key actors responsible for bringing an intervention into being. In terms of the spaces where interventions are realised, there is a physical realm and a digital realm, which, when combined, is sometimes referred to colloquially as a ‘phygital’ space. While the design interventions referred to in this research took place in physical public spaces in Pretoria and Cape Town (outlined in Chapter Three), they both showed potential to extend to virtual platforms.

Nowadays, virtual participation is made possible through the use of the internet as a communication tool. Social media, for example, can certainly be used as a tool for propaganda, but what was evident from the four design interventions considered here, is that social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram encouraged people to share experiences and locations of interventions such as City Walk Saturdays (in Cape Town) and Feast of the Clowns (in Pretoria). In this way, there is the possibility of plugging into both spaces – physical and digital. Within a South African context, an argument can be made that participation may be restricted to a ‘privileged’ group who have access to resources such as transport and the internet. While such a sentiment may hold true, digital promotion does not necessarily hinder civic participation because the use of mobile phones is ubiquitous in South Africa.²⁰ Social media can therefore assist in mobilising the key actors, and citizens at large, to action. This has been seen more recently by way of the *Fees Must Fall* protests in South Africa;²¹ student protesters used online platforms to garner support and to promote events, including protest action and night vigils, for example.

While four key city actors have been identified, all of whom play a significant role in the process, it was found that it is generally the design-related practitioners who conceptualise ideas and drive them towards implementation; the citizens who fit the bill as driven designers generally have an

¹⁹ The concept of ‘plugging in’ is informed by emerging codes in the rich data that were generated with the research participants. Hence, the use of the term in this thesis has no bearing on the concept of the same name, which is attributed to Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and that has subsequently been adopted by Jackson and Mazzei (2013) for their research on qualitative data analysis.

²⁰ From my experience with UX design projects, which form part of undergraduate students’ curricula in design, I have first-hand exposure to applications that attest to the ubiquitous use of mobile phones and how local apps cater for users from different income brackets; one such project is documented in Cassim & Honiball (2015).

²¹ *Fees must Fall* is a student-led protest by students at tertiary institutions in South Africa in reaction to the increasing rates of tuition fees. This protest movement began in 2015 and has seen numerous revivals since.

ability to draw on their design skills in order to create spaces that are conducive to dialogue and action, thereby encouraging other actors to plug in. To this end, one driven designer spoke to the ability of an intervention to draw people in through the application of a designer's visual literacy:

Didi: I do think that it was designed in a way that if you stumbled upon it, you'd find something potentially that could be interesting to you, you'd find a way of plugging in, or you could just move on without having to be sucked in.

Since designers insert design interventions in public spaces and thereby promote and draw attention to the topic or social cause being addressed, it is no surprise that numerous designers whom I interviewed for this study come from a communication design background. Their professional design training as well as other academic and/or industry experience have equipped them with problem-solving skills to address complex challenges in the real-world. The empirical evidence points towards the following types of social justice related challenges faced by poor and working-class South Africans, which were used as the focal point for the design interventions that were explored as a point of departure to meet the aims of this grounded theory study:

- spatial logic/urban planning (specifically in informal urban settlements);
- sanitation;
- budgets and resource allocation; as well as
- the criminal justice system, including safety and policing (both informal and formal).

Participating in design activism allows designers to grapple with these abovementioned social issues while at the same time making their tacit, design knowledge visible. Such implicit and explicit knowledge are revealed on the ground, within the context of design interventions, where designer's abductive (big-picture) way of thinking, as well as the tangible design outputs that may be used as part of the intervention, become visible. The following statement by a driven designer attests to the recognition of a designer's tacit knowledge and capabilities: "*design activism is about trying to tap into what we do naturally*" (Bruce). This actor's sentiment that design is an "*asset-based approach*" (Bruce) was prevalent throughout the interview.

Another driven designer shared a similar viewpoint about designers' being naturally experimental with the application of their creative assets:

Kirsten: So, from a design point of view, I think designers ... it's just part of their DNA to sort of think outside of the box and kind of disrupt ...

This identification of design as an “asset-based approach” speaks to the methodology of “asset-based community development” (Kretzmann & McKnight 1993) where development is based on the strengths of those who organise and motivate the community members into action. Within a South African context, this approach is valuable owing to scarce resources; it encourages communities to use their existing skills and resources and thereby has the potential to empower them.

The recognition of one’s tacit design/intuitive way of thinking and inherent creativity is not restricted to the driven designers. The other city actors who plugged in to the interventions also recognised their potential in this regard. One driven designer who worked closely with citizens noted from his experience that concerned citizens for example realise through their participation that they also have “*know-how*” (Rael). This type of acknowledgement that came with recognising one’s know-how and capacity for new ways of doing was expressed by a concerned citizen who had participated in a design intervention that was held in her community; following from the experience, her newfound appreciation could be heard when she noted the following in an interview:

Malwande: Yes, it was our work after the design storming. They come, and give us ideas ... And, I think they try to open our minds about the ways of doing somethings. Showed us pictures ...

So, while the resource-related constraints that are faced by the driven designers spur and foster their creativity, they need the support of the other city actors – community members, corporate sponsors as well as government officials – to see an intervention through, from start to finish. Like a ‘plug-in’ in computing terms, the concept of plugging in connotes a resource that can operate independently yet enhances the functionality of other applications if run together. Similarly, the four types of actors whom I interviewed as research participants were of the opinion that when the city actors come together to support one another and share their respective resources, design activism becomes a much more involved process. One driven designer noted that “... *design activism needs to happen as a collective*” (Mike), while another recognised through his experience that “*it was all interconnected in a way ...*” (George).

4.2.1.1 Creating a platform and public for engagement

Creating a platform and public for engagement denotes the communal action(s) of the city actors once they have plugged into a concept or roll-out of a design intervention. Basically, this subcategory comprises an action – namely the gathering of resources to create a safe, communal space for an intervention – and the consequence of that action – bringing the key actors together and engaging them on a tactile as well as a cognitive level. To this end, this subcategory reflects on two

overarching types of platforms that are created: a physical-space as well as a head-space (or mindset) for civic engagement.

In keeping with the general nature of design interventions, they cannot exist without civic actors. This viewpoint brings to mind JF Kennedy's presidential inaugural address that focussed on the importance of civic action and public service for the common good; he wanted to inspire American citizens to action by proclaiming: "Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country". Similarly, when creating a platform for engagement, the role of the four city actors is to encourage citizens to consider what they can do to play their part towards developing their cities and communities to become more citizen-centric and socially just. More importantly, the platform of the intervention needs to bring together actors who would otherwise not necessarily interact with one another, making the action of working together a key property of creating a platform for engagement. In this way, a particular public is also created for a specific, civic purpose.

The city actors who have plugged in already and who try to get other actors to plug in harness their own strengths that they bring to an intervention. This act of bringing one's own skills and ideas to an intervention has the potential to strengthen the individual capabilities of the respective actors, and consequently expands the public's capabilities. This act of expanding and appreciating capabilities is also noted below as a conscious tactic within the context of design activism as a means to bridge differences that may come to the fore amongst actors during an intervention:

Andrew: And so, there's also this attempt in my work to set up encounters where there is a likelihood that people will find one another across their differences and find each other's differences stimulating in terms of their own production. So that suddenly ... they are augmented by one another. So that their range of capacities are extended. So suddenly I was seeing myself as an artist, I was thinking about painting, I was working, you know, I had been studying painting, I'm just imagining someone now. I've been studying oil paints and working on a canvas and I meet someone who is a, an interior designer. And I, instead of seeing that person as someone who is inferior to me I suddenly am in an encounter where that person becomes interesting to me and the encounter is facilitated in such a way that the interior designer produces with me so that I as a painter start to see forms of production in the world that I could borrow and that would augment my practices as a painter but that are outside the realm of painting.

Fatima: Yes, I understand.

Andrew: So that's a very small example and that's what I do on a very big scale. Like that's been my work for the last 20 years, is just to do that over and over, to experiment, to do that across as many differences as I can.

Fatima: What I am hearing is actually that ... 'two heads are better than one'.

Andrew: Yeah, yeah, definitely.

Furthermore, the data indicate that the success of creating a platform for engagement rests on collaborative efforts of the four city actors and the participation of the public; it is uncommon (and also counter-productive) for platforms for engagement to be created privately. One actor clearly highlighted this collaborative nature:

Rike: So it's very rarely that we do our own individual project ... they're pretty much always collective ... it's bringing people in to respond ... and if it is our project, then it's generally you know, something that's kind of more process-based and involves inviting you know various people ...

While some platforms for engagement are more informal and are not promoted beyond the immediate, physical and social environment, some platforms for engagement have a more formal face and are sometimes linked to bigger events, as acknowledged by one actor:

Rike: Some of the projects have happened ... as part of, more, you know, kind of formal collaborations with other institutions ...

However, the extent of participation by each actor is variable because it is not always easy and/or possible to receive equal support from the key actors as well as the general public who come face to face with an intervention. This rift is emphasised in the following excerpt:

Kirsten: Tactical urbanism brings people out from behind their desks ... I mean that's really a good, active, participation point of view because I need the decision makers to participate as much as I need people on the street to participate and often times there's quite a big chasm.

Even though there is acknowledgement of possible differences in the four actors' attitudes towards getting involved in an intervention, for those who have plugged in, the creation of a mutual space (yet a space that allows for different ways of thinking) sets the tone of the intervention and also anticipates more or less its trajectory of civic engagement for the duration of the intervention. From a pragmatic point of view, the city actors who plug in turn to design methods/tools to give shape to the intended platform for engagement; the actors also use design as a tactic to create the public for a particular intervention. To this end, two educational contexts in which design was used were identified.

The first context that emerged from the data is a formal, educational setting. In an institutional setting, such as a school or university classroom, individual teachers see their classrooms as a

catalyst for action and use their classrooms as an opportunity to promote engagement and encourage activism. The teacher's professional position generally gives them access to resources (such as information) and in turn, they can make these resources available to students. This type of motivation can be either active or passive. In its passive form, the motivation is primarily focused on sharing information about an intervention; in its active form, the motivation to encourage engagement actually stems from curriculum-related participation and/or voluntary community engagement where concerned citizens (in their formal capacity as learners) are involved in an intervention on an operational level. Examples of these different types of motivation and their respective contexts are provided below.

One notable instance when the passive form of motivation became visible to me, is when I asked a group of learners in Cape Town, during a City Walk Saturday, to explain how they knew about the city intervention. In response, one student acknowledged his teacher as the motivating force behind his subsequent involvement:

Fatima: What got you involved as part of the African Reads [during City Walk Saturday]?

Lunwabo: I am a member in school. My school's name is Zonnebloem so my teacher told me about this thing so we came along as learners. So that's what got us involved in this.

From a formal educator's perspective, this passive, word-of-mouth motivation in classrooms was also acknowledged. One actor, for example, noted the following: *"My daughter heard about it from school"* (Mpho).²² The fact that the students chose to participate out of free will hints at the capacity of concerned citizens to become involved of their own accord. Moreover, the element of fun as a pretext for civic engagement when citizens find pleasure in participation does not go unnoticed in the following interview excerpt:

Ukhona:²³ So we've got a combination of high school going kids and professional artists, kind of looking and researching and us kind of giving them material around books written by African authors. So, in so doing, so the school part, it means that, and it's the second or third time that we're working with this specific school on this subject so those kids obviously come from somewhere ... the number is a 100 ... and it's based on other campaigns that are going on elsewhere.

Fatima: So ... is it mandatory for them to come ...?

²² Feast of the Clowns participant 1.

²³ City Walk participant 4.

Ukhona: No, it's self-identified. Well, they belong to a dance class which is an arts and culture class from Zonnebloem High School which is very active in terms of making sure that they engage with things that happen within the city and get to perform quite regularly, but them belonging to the dance classes, they're not forced. Them choosing to be here, to do this thing, they're not forced. They just love working with us and engaging with the material.

An example of an active form of motivation towards the creation of a platform for engagement is taking learners outside of a formal classroom environment and into the real-world. Hence, the second context for creating platforms for engagement also maintains an educational focus but becomes an informal, classroom-type setting in an urban and/or suburban location in South Africa. In the following excerpt, a driven designer, who is a design educator by profession, explains his teaching approach as being an activist one when asked about his understanding of design activism. He also acknowledges how an activist attitude also has a more widespread reach because it has the potential to trickle down to the learners: to motivate them to take initiative, and ultimately to become more active outside the classroom and beyond disciplinary confines:

Bruce: Well I first came into contact with the term when reading Alastair Fuad-Luke's book, and then also being lucky enough to actually meet with him in Finland before he came out here... I think that it aligns very, very closely with the method of teaching and the type of awareness that I have been trying to introduce to students for many years now, is that they are not just simply designers doing the bidding of clients or you know the world of, sort of the corporate world but design activism is something that they can actually do to personally express their feelings about something ... or to actively change the status quo in the social domain. And I think it's a very active stance that I believe students need to actually be aware of ... so that they can actively participate as citizens ... in this particular context.

Fatima: So just, if you can elaborate ... the students you speak about, are they graphic design students?

Bruce: Yeah, primarily graphic design students but it is, it's a concept or it's an approach that I've carried into numerous situations where it's beyond that discipline ...

The reference to formal and informal encouragement of design activism was highlighted again as the interview progressed with the driven-design:

Fatima: Okay, so tell me then about your experience of implementing design interventions in the city if you have been involved in any and what sort of pertinent social issues were faced by the citizens?

Bruce: Well, I could trace it back to a Design Storming workshop that I was a part of back in 2012. And I, that particular issue was around solid waste management or the issue of solid waste in informal settlements.

Fatima: Was that the first Design Storm that took place?

Bruce: Yeah, that was the very first one. Yeah, it was June or July of 2012. I'm a member of the Cape Town Design Network and this was a platform of action that we developed. We co-developed it with the Social Justice Coalition and the Cape Town Partnership to, yeah, bring designers and non-designers together in a particular situation where you've got a vibrant mix of stakeholders and ... tackling issues from an activist stance rather than simply just accepting the way that things are. So I think that was possibly one of the earlier points where I was, you know, working with this material outside of this institution. Inside this institution I have been using design activism as a stance within the social awareness project that we run with our third years, our third year graphic designers. And that's often about being quite challenging of an NGO who is fighting for a particular issue. Challenging in sort of what kind of communication design that they may need. The students are kind of activists in the way that they actually challenge, again the status quo, what the NGO thinks is required to practice as an NGO. So it's not just about designing another logo or a brochure but it is actually really about grappling with the issues that the NGO is dealing with and coming up with alternative methods to create awareness or creating a call to action.

Fatima: But would the need then stem, would you be approached from the NGO or is it something that students identify the need for?

Bruce: Yeah, since 1999, when we started doing the social awareness project, we've tackled it in many different ways. Sometimes it is a case of them approaching us but in most cases, the students are approaching the NGOs and offering their services. It's group work so the students are not working individually ...

Bruce: I think, as a citizen, it really made me want to use my skills and my capacity as an educator to bring more people into the space where one's influencing and catalysing change in some way ...

Overall, these two dominant educational contexts where design methods, tools and tactics are used raise a pertinent point about design activism and citizenship playing out *in situ*. For example, one driven designer was resolute in her belief of the potential of affecting change in wards²⁴ in Cape Town:

Kirsten: So look for me the Ward project is interesting because I thought if anything is gonna happen, it has to happen there [on the ground] ...

A noteworthy point highlighted in the empirical evidence about the use of design as a tool to create a platform for engagement is that, even though the platforms are related to different publics,

²⁴ Here, the term 'ward' refers to an electoral locality in a South African municipality.

the interventions do not always develop in the public domain. Since the interventions considered for purposes of this research tackled a relevant social issue, the actors realised that the issues are contingent on the context and happen in the immediate environment in which the problem is prevalent and experienced. The intention of this internal outlook is to ensure that the city actors and those who have resources to support the intervention(s) have clarity about the situation and can conceptualise an appropriate platform for engagement.

According to the following actor, one who fits the persona of a driven designer, it is essential to take people “out of hiding” (Kirsten) and into the space so that they do not create platforms for engagement that are based on their own assumptions (and perceived needs) but rather on actual needs in the real-world:

Kirsten: So, but the theory of tactical urbanism is that we don't, we don't go stakeholder mapping, we bring the decision makers to the places that stakeholders use and talk in spatial terms about things that are actually quite hard to describe. So, so, I mean that's totally the way that I'm trying to approach it and what I'm trying to do is with the City [of Cape Town], to kind of manipulate them, I didn't use the word manipulate, what I said: gently encouraged them to get out from behind their desks. Even simply, something as simple is something I did about two months ago where there was a whole bunch of decision makers making decisions about public art who had never ever seen in real life a lot of the public art in the city. I said let's just go and see it, I'm not going to do anything I'm just going to say let's go and see it. I will take you and show you – already changed a lot of mindsets. So I think actually getting people out of offices as a tactical urbanism methodology, just physically getting onto the street, I think is important ...

There is also the recognition that being physically present in a space can be empowering in terms of allowing one a voice:

Dalli: There is dignity to be found in being able to speak about your lived experience. I think it's empowering to actually be in a space where you can also try and think through what the potential solutions to that might be and might look like.

It is evident that platforms that are created for engagement not only disrupt the space in which they exist, but also have the capacity and potential to disrupt the way that citizens (both the lead actors and the general public) observe and interact with the platform. City walks serve as a good example in this regard; they facilitate new platforms in existing spaces by means of new walking routes. The creation of new platforms for engagement in existing spaces therefore has the ability to bring citizens together and to get them to face one another in a more direct way. Similar to the way in which the four city actors promote and motivate engagement in both passive and active forms, the

emphasis on encouraging participation amongst the public who come face-to-face with the platform also takes a passive as well as an active form. The passive form includes observation, where “*people are looking at it*” (Cindy) and the active form includes a hands-on approach to participation (provided that the intervention allows for immediate interaction). One actor who facilitated an intervention in Pretoria as part of the Cool Capital biennale, reiterates this duality by stating that “*the public is actually either involved [in an intervention] or able to view it*” (Tjaart). However, the general consensus among the actors was that “tactile engagement” has more of a transformative potential for civic engagement:

Alexia: I think generally anything that is participatory is quite fascinating and I mean it's nice to have a public piece of artwork, but that's less interesting for me than something where people can get tactile engagement, and kind of transform that engagement into what they want to say and kind of giving voice.

The creation of a platform for engagement is regarded as a point of departure for the phenomenon of design citizenship:

Marcela: In tackling things like recreation, social interaction, public transport, I mean a very, a wide number of areas, but to me the most immediate impact it can have, has to do with, with people sharing space that normally is not shared because of all the historical, political and geographic reasons that, that there are. So I mean to me that, that's a very powerful start, starting point.

While this platform precedes the effects of the civic engagement, its activation of a specific space sets the tone for participation and the facilitation of creating new networks and/or strengthening existing networks. Time, funding and collective action then determine its overall success (as emphasised in section 4.3, namely “the processes of design citizenship”).

4.2.1.2 Massaging conversations

Once there has been a conscious setting-up of a platform for engagement as well as the gathering of a public to participate, the actors who drive the intervention begin to massage conversations regarding the topic/social issue at hand. To get the public to ease into the intervention, the role of the actors is to disrupt thoughts and spaces; the disruptions can be regarded as an attempt to initiate debate and thereby encourage critical thinking among all the citizens who have plugged into the intervention. This activation is referred to by one of the actors as the “*conscientising of designers*” (Bruce), and by extension, the conscientising of the other actors to make them aware of social and political conditions, as a precursor to challenge the status quo. The term ‘conscientising’

forms the cornerstone of Freire's (1970) educational philosophy and is apparent in the process of design activism owing to the action and organisation of place(s) and public(s) that happens when creating a platform for engagement. When considering the formal and informal learning environments identified as part of the notion of plugging in, it is evident that the platforms for engagement are, in essence, learning encounters for citizens. Accordingly, the analogy of massaging conversations is used to identify this sub-category as the point of contact for the public involved with an intervention.

The word massage is rooted in the Arabic language, in which it means to touch or feel; similarly, the Greek verb, *massō*, is defined as "to handle, to touch, to work with the hands" (Massage 2018). Like a massage or other traditional methods of healing, which use tactile, human engagement, the topics addressed by the design interventions became the pressure points that need attention in the real-world. The analogy of a massage can be taken further to describe this action of design activism as an aesthetic experience, which serves as an alternative healing method for citizens. Hence, the repair and improvement of a specific problem is not a once-off intervention and requires a number of rubs and nudges before getting closer to the desired outcome. For example, one participant stated that *"... it is a circular way of working where we start things and we refine and we research and we test and then we continuously implement"* (Bulelwa).

Another actor also mentioned the ongoing, cyclical nature of his work with design interventions when asked about his way of massaging. There was a clear indication in his tone of voice that his point of departure is to act on prior knowledge but then he works closely, over time, to develop a means of production relevant to the context through *"constant tinkering"* (Andrew) and experimentation. The following excerpt speaks clearly to the process of intervening on the ground through design activism:

Andrew: Typically in my work I would say, I draw, I tend to draw more from the design side because I am more familiar with that.

Fatima: In terms of ... what exactly in terms of? Process? Or product? Or what exactly do you draw from?

Andrew: Definitely process. So, as a sort of first answer to that question, so my method is always iterative ... the idea of aversioning is kind of central to my method both as a producer but also as a teacher ... and that I kind of see as a form of design thinking ... Or as a design practice. As a sort of a core, as one of the sort of core approaches to producing in the world, both within the formal worlds of design but also obviously what is outside of what is formally

described as design, where craft, a craftsman for example, or a craft's group would, or someone making something would over many iterations change the way that they're making something ... I mean of course, I now may be speaking a little bit philosophically, it's also something that one finds in any case in the world outside of human and perhaps even outside of biological life. One finds this constant tinkering in the universe as it kind of experiments with itself in a material way and produces things which are better suited to particular contexts and particular times and somehow that feels to me quite close to the way that I work.

Another key idea, related to the process of massaging conversations, which is referred to in the excerpt above is that of 'aversioning'. Here the word aversioning implies the act of 'playing devil's advocate', which essentially can be understood as a form of exploring alternatives, or as the driven designer notes, "*design thinking*". To this end, the pressure that is exerted on the design intervention's public is at first meant to comfort them and assure them of a sense of security (in terms of providing a safe and comfortable platform for interaction) and secondly, to create discomfort in an attempt to tackle difficult issues and promote critical thinking. The disruption of the status quo (with regard to public space), which the driven designers generally aim for, extends to the physical space in which the actors operate. Hence, moving away from the norm may be both an intention as well as a result of design interventions. Once again, the idea of a message to take actors out of their comfort zones, resonates with Freire's (1970) "pedagogy of the oppressed"; his argument is that the masses need to have a heightened sense of awareness in order to question existing power structures that hinder their development and well-being as citizens. Likewise, creating aesthetic surprises or disruptions in the landscape, the intention of design interventions is to dismantle a consensus- and consumption-driven culture; in this way, a new experience is created, which brings with it new perspectives (both literally and spatially) for citizens. This implies that design activism may be aligned with other forms of design such as design for provocation and speculative design. As one driven designer reflected on his own instance of design activism, interventions have the capacity to disrupt expectations of a space, which citizens may have developed over time:

George: *So for me it was about designing something, which, I guess is already designed, but I mean, you have to make something which moves you away from, from what you're normally used to. So I'm normally used to making something which, I guess, is very appealing, very aesthetic, very you know nice, lavished and what you know ... and a lot of people wouldn't like, expect that. Especially on a random day, if it's unannounced and they just go there one day, they see that, it's kind of like, it kind of like, it removes you from what's your, your average everyday experience would be.*

Later in the interview, the same actor acknowledged that the passive form of engagement has the capacity to develop into an active form where action begins with the act of conversation:

George: People actually stopped and stared and some of them actually asked me what I was doing.

Observation can also lead to recognising public space as being user-friendly. For example, one actor who facilitated a Cool Capital intervention in Pretoria, in a previously unused alley, realised the following from his experience:

Tjaart: I noticed that more people actually went to that alleyway, sat down there during lunch breaks, walked around in it, and, yah, just experienced it as a good vibe.

While the process of massaging conversations rests on the dimension of time, and therefore persistent probing, its focus is on two different points of contact and also of learning: firstly, design and secondly, social justice issue(s) and their impact. Essentially the former subject matter facilitates conversations about the latter in a more seamless manner and serves as a pre-text for communication among the four city actors as well as other citizens.

‘Massaging conversations about design’ is aimed at creating an awareness of design amongst citizens. Within a South African context, the general understanding of design remains at a very basic level; for example, it is also often disregarded as a career option owing to the perceptions that it will not be lucrative as a profession.²⁵ Furthermore, design seems to have gained negative publicity in Cape Town, owing to the World Design capital that was held in 2014. Many citizens drew on their negative experience of the World Cup in 2010, when they experienced many false promises as a community. Capetonian citizens became increasingly despondent with big, international events, which showed in their criticism of the World Design Capital. For example, one actor reacted as follows: “the City [of Cape Town] was saying design, we can design this cool stuff that’s gonna change the, a community. Of course nothing happened!” (Kirsten). The following type of critique is another instance where criticism was aimed at the government, this time specifically for their lack of spatial redress:

Dustin: This idea that the City of Cape Town is kind of proffering around government, just doesn't, it really doesn't go with what's actually happening, the reality, particularly with how resources are allocated.

²⁵ I have first-hand experience with this perception of design owing to my position as a lecturer at a tertiary institution in South Africa. Diversity of students (as national means of redress) is a key pivot at institutions of higher learning in South Africa, but one of the reasons why students are often discouraged by their parents to pursue a degree in the ‘arts’ is owing to a lack of understanding of what design and the design industry entails.

Another actor went further to argue for the need to educate the people about design:

Didi: I have a very hard time with design, especially after World Design Capital. I think that there were so many things that went wrong with it that even when I hear the word design, there's something in me that kind of just twitches a bit, like uh-eh, don't know if I want to do that. I think that the beginning point is to really start to unpack what design is and to point to ways that everyday people are using design anyway. Because at the moment, the word design is like this elite word that, this elite space, word, thing that only a few people use. Erm, but I know for a fact that there's, on a daily basis we are using design thinking to move through life and to advance humanity ... so I think, I don't know, I think that it needs to be something that's in schools, not something that we wait to learn at some institution of higher learning at some later stage ... I think it's also, little bit the onus is on designers, or the designers, the design world whatever that really means, who are focused on design, in helping people recognise when design is being used so that we can understand the importance...

I think what then happens is that instead of design activism being something that is embraced because it should be embraced, it is something that is positive, it's then something that's pushed away because it's like what do designers do for us? We had World Design Capital and I still have a toilet that's not really a toilet so you haven't done anything for me so why should I embrace you? I don't trust you. So that relationship needs to be re-built, relooked at and patched up and people need to really start to understand what design is and designers I guess, well the design world needs to maybe design stuff that does enhance people's lives and documents that in a really good way because half of the battle is communicating the way that design can help people.

The key actors therefore felt that design interventions, with a specific focus on a social issue and in a specific location, can go further in massaging conversations around the nature of design as a discipline. During the data generation process, actors considered the general role of design in society and interpreted the range of roles that the driven designers assumed during instances of design activism. According to one actor, “they’re [designers] supposed to be able to wear multiple hats, understand multiple worlds and synthesise information” (Richard). Similarly, from the rich data that were generated with the city actors, I identified five overarching metaphors for the driven designers’ roles. The metaphors essentially connote the designers’ actions and are thus labelled as follows: being an athlete, educating, cheerleading, translating, and harvesting. These metaphors help to shed light on the reasons why designers, as one of the four key actors, have the capacity to massage conversations about design, which is then used as a pretext to discuss the social issue(s). These five roles also support a closer inspection of the persona of a driven designer.

- **Being an athlete**

The city actors explained that driven designers are not risk-averse and as a result they can act swiftly when the need arises. One designer explained this eloquently in the excerpt below by comparing this agility to that of an athlete's. Whereas athletes are generally known to champion physical endurance and strength, the driven designers are able to exercise their creative muscle to massage conversations; they exhibit endurance through determination and experimentation:

Fatima: What was the intention of the intervention? And your specific role then, within that?

Bruce: Yeah, well I think the big challenge is to allow or to create a space where people can think differently and suspend their judgement, or suspend their typical process and designers are very good at following out and doing things without too much reflection or too much forethought. They kind of, the analogy I always use is the athlete at the starting point, who is very keen to go. We are kind of hard-wired to do that so getting designers and non-designers alike to actually kind of play in that suspension mode and that listening mode and that storytelling mode is the key component of working with citizens and working with designers around the table. And then really, kind of, exploring the possible ideas that emerge out of that conducive space is obviously the next step. So, I mean it's very similar to the design thinking kind of modes.

- **Educating**

A conceptual discovery made through the grounded theory process is that many of the driven designers self-identified not only as design professionals but also as educators. For example, one actor channelled her professional experience into working on a formal design programme that could be used in schools in a particular South African province to educate students and their teachers about design. While this was a formal intervention that used a printed output – a manual – as its medium for engagement, it nonetheless had activist intentions to get a broader civic audience to think more critically about the process and value of design. She elaborated on the programme as follows:

Suné: So we wanted it also to become a vehicle to create pride in South African products ... at that time teenagers, you know, were more about what was happening in America ... and the rest of the world. And to also use it as a vehicle to create ... role models, South African role models within the creative industry, and also an opportunity for the educators and the kids to learn from the best that our country has to offer. And we were, I mean we had this manual that we created featured 86 case studies. Every case study was individually approached, so that we could get the most out of the information

but we also used it as a process where we upfront in the case study say: this was the client's brief, this was how the designer interpreted the brief, this is the design process they followed, this was the impact of the design or the intervention, with the hope that through repetition the educators and the kids will learn about the design process ... And also learn about, in general, the world of design.

- **Cheerleading**

Although the word cheerleader is synonymous with American sporting culture, it denotes a physical and verbal act of encouragement. Finding the metaphor of a cheerleader very curious when writing a memo, I decided to read about the origins of cheerleading and was surprised to find out that it began as a result of male students rebelling against abusive teachers in America during the latter part of the eighteenth century. In response to the ill-treatment from faculty members, students initially turned to violent protest but later adopted a more constructive approach by organising their own extra-mural activities as a way of declaring their independence (Cheerleading 2018). The notion of designers as cheerleaders shares this sentiment. The actors who were involved in civic-driven design interventions in the city, described their experience as a form of organised cheerleading. This means that the organisations that champion a certain cause, mobilise citizens first and then proceed to cheer them on in an attempt to motivate them towards self-directed action. This results in a passive form of protest but one that is more sustainable in the long run. Perhaps it was the fact that the actors who were interviewed owing to their design backgrounds have a knack for creative articulation, but I felt that one response in particular – to my question about whether the intervention under question actually encourages an active citizenry – deserves a mention here. The response below clearly articulates the many roles that designers, as the key city actors, play. Ultimately, the initial roles lead to a significant cheerleading role that is meant to be an empowering one if it is carried out with suitable intent:

Bulelwa: Yes, they do. I mean that the work that we've done in Church Square which I am sure Didi [a colleague] has spoken to you about that is aimed at that ... we now have active and participatory group or community, if you like, around Church Square. So, our work which is really based on the many different roles that we take ... Sometimes we have what we call a rowing project ... Church Square was for a while a rowing model project which means that we put our resources in there. We start a project. At some stage we move towards a steering role where we steer ... the project and eventually

what then happens is that we move into a cheering role. Right now we can say that Church Square is in a cheering role which means that the community self-activates and they carry out the events that we had started and what we do is to cheer them on as they carry out that work. Yeah.

- **Translating**

Owing to the very low literacy rates in South Africa, coupled with a basic understanding of design, citizens are not always able to understand terminology and correspondence aimed at them. Therefore, as one city actor explains below, a hierarchy is created between those who speak and those who receive the information. As a result, the driven designers realise the need to translate complex information for citizens into an accessible manner; this is to ensure that citizens can be equipped with the knowledge to stand up for themselves and increased agency to make informed decisions about issues that influence them directly. Driven designers therefore seize the opportunity to refer to their repertoire of visual means of communication to get messages across to a broader audience and to work towards creating a level playing field:

Kirsten: So a lot of ... the design terminology we use ... is very specific and unless you have like studied design and you've like studied like urban planning I mean, you know, you know if I say there's this 'no kind of spatial hierarchy', I mean people would be like, 'I don't know what that means' ... But it's a, it's a really big problem because hierarchies ... spatial hierarchy just quickly is just basically like how people make decisions on how they choose routes because visually there are, there are clues as to where important routes are therefore you're assuming there'd be a traffic light, you're assuming there'd be policing, you're assuming there'd be taxis. You know, so how does it intuitively make new spaces? So, you know, when that's mixed up, then that's problematic. So, but I can't say to like a community group 'guys, this is hierarchically inappropriate' you know. So I translate a lot of words and but the thing is once people understand that terminology, then they can go to meetings and say, well what about the hierarchy, or what about you know, that, that, terminology that they now have they are now equipped to ask better questions. And so for me that is quite important. So, the one meeting that I went to ... which I felt like I left that there, which was good was ... a cycle lane ... going in on Albert Road ... and I went to a public participation meeting just as a cyclist, but what ended up happening

is I ended up translating what they were saying to the group of people that were there, because these engineers and planners couldn't speak English ... And, and so you know they were like ... we're gonna divide the road, with these, you know there's like Class C, whatever, I'm like: nobody knows what class C means. Actually what that means is that for the most part you are gonna feel safe... Except at the intersections, and I'm like ... oh that's not good. I'm like who are they? Exactly. But they you know, they use terminology I think to, a lot of guys either, I mean they're ignorant, they don't under[stand], they don't know how to speak outside of their design profession, or they do so to expedite things because if people don't understand people aren't gonna ask questions. So, so I think, so for me most of the times when I go to community meetings I try and make that design terminology clear and I think from a ... work point of view I feel like I have a lot of value to add there while obviously nobody pays me and that's not very sustainable...

Similarly, another actor also criticised existing instances of public participation as being inaccessible to citizens at large by sharing the following observation:

Dustin: Citizen, the problem, the thing is that citizen engagement is hard ... I mean that in the sense that not only are there very few avenues for real participation, but participation is actually often blocked ... it's not just that the budget is incomprehensible, you know.

- **Harvesting**

The metaphor used to describe the fifth role of designers is the notion of driven designers as harvesters, as one actor explains:

Bruce: Well, I think that part of design thinking is this asset-based approach ... where you're harvesting all the good things that are often lying in.

The metaphor of harvesting implies that driven designers have the methods and tools to gather a crop of ideas from those involved in a particular intervention. They draw on their design thinking skills to massage conversations until the understanding and ideas of the other actors are ripe, and then they also help to bring their ideas out to play. Some of the design methods that were identified during the fieldwork range from using humour and graphic facilitation to brainstorming and carrying out social audits as forms of participatory and community-based research. Social audits are explained by one actor in the following way:

Dustin: A good example of that, of adapting methods and ways to organise and in fact, this is very much, this is about community monitoring

and participation and ... it's like taking different methods, developing them, looking at things in new ways ... but, and so in this case it's made up of doing actual like audits of a particular service... and it's community members who do the auditing ... And then they come out with real kind of hard evidence which is then presented to government officials in a public hearing.

These types of research-related, design methods operate on three levels – documentation, observation and communication (dialogue); they mimic a co-design process because they favour a bottoms-up approach by asking people about their experiences. Alternatively, one experiences the platform for engagement in a personal capacity. For example, one actor noted the following about his role: *“I was the, sort of the, I don’t know what they called it, design informant or something, for one of the ward projects where I basically had to observe and collect all the outcomes from that workshop ...”* (Rael).

These research-related methods help to frame the public space where the platform for engagement takes shape, making citizens more aware of their right to the city. According to one actor, it was while using research-related design methods *“where a lot of civil engagement happened”* (George).

Overall, owing to the driven designers’ inherent determination and iterative way of working, they understand that time and effort can reap benefits so they apply the same way of thinking during design interventions. Harvesting strategies to yield results (that is design methods) also depend largely on participatory and co-design methods. Designers use collaborative ways of working as a means of nourishing and growing alternate solutions in response to their questioning of the status quo. This way of working suggests that the notion of driven designers as harvesters relates to the idea of designers as “agents of alternatives” (Fuad-Luke, Hirscher & Moebus 2015) to achieve deeper forms of democratic participation.

While the five abovementioned metaphors for driven designers share many similarities, they are distinguished from one another in terms of the primary attribute they display or the design tool/method employed. The methods are chosen based on their appropriateness for the pressure point (that is, the social issue) that needs to be massaged. Furthermore, the roles are not restricted to the driven designers and can be adopted by any of the other city actors. From my own experience as the principal investigator in this research, I realised that I also participated in the act of massaging conversations during the data generation process. The open-ended questions that I posed to the

interviewees often led them to a stream-of-consciousness being narrated to me. In this way, as a design researcher, my role encouraged the interviewees to reflect on their actions and experiences in a more conscious manner. In some instances, I also became a translator when asked to explain design-related terms that I used in some of my questions and ultimately, with the intention of data generation towards a grounded theory, my approach could also be seen as that of a harvester.

Overall, the general format of a design intervention depends on the resources that are available to the respective actors involved. Hence, there is a flexibility in terms of creativity, with constraints often encouraging the actors' creativity instead of hindering it. A lack of funding and permission to use a space were identified by the actors as being two of the biggest challenges with regard to the form an intervention can take. For example:

Tjaart: He knew he wanted to do something to do ... with crossings and stuff, so we actually drove around, trying to find something to use that we didn't have to pay for and to get, actually get permission to, to block off roads and stuff ... I helped him basically try and get permission and get all those things done ... and then we, we experienced quite a lot of problems... instance actually painting on the road and stuff I mean that wasn't permissible. So what we did is actually trying to conceptualise and come up with an ... alternative, which we did.

More than one role or design method/tool can be used simultaneously, depending on the intention and the aims of a particular intervention. Some methods revealed by actors include the use of photographs, telling stories and drawing ideas, to name a few. Within a South African context, there are specific types of probes and tools that are more appropriate. For example, an oral storytelling tradition is often employed to cater to low levels of literacy amongst the population. I return to the act of storytelling in more detail in section 4.3.2.2.

While one actor indicated that “*design can bring some tremendous tools in, creating that citizen and that social engagement that one's looking for*” (Richard), another recognised that even though design tools and tactics may be used, the terms design or design thinking do not have to be made explicit in an intervention. For example, actors specified that:

Bulelwa: A lot of what we do in terms of design in Africa is not necessarily seen through the lens of design ...

Didi: It's always so interesting this topic. Because I feel that in townships I feel that there is a lot of design activism [laughs] ... And it's not called that ...

It follows then that design tools and methods need to be given more attention than the actor (most likely but not restricted to the driven designer) who may be applying them. Here, anonymity has a greater benefit for design interventions since it does not impose a hierarchy on the actors; the actors who play a facilitating role for the design intervention should ideally serve as guides to nurture design citizenship and should not be prescriptive. In this sense, they should try to get the other actors who are involved to understand the causes of their social problems as opposed to merely treating the social symptoms that they are experiencing.

The abovementioned views held by the city actors reinforce the idea that creativity and abductive ways of thinking are inherent to citizens in general and they also have the capacity to be nurtured into a strategic competence amongst the city actors to manage conversations about difficult/sensitive topics. The following excerpt speaks to this point by indicating that the use of design tools and methods facilitates a sense of democracy in the sense that it does not alienate any actor from experiencing the effects of the message since it provides common ground and helps to overcome barriers such as language and culture:

Richard: The design methods that we used, took language and culture off the table, so it didn't matter if you didn't speak English ... it didn't matter if you were creative or not creative, you could contribute ... and everybody was equal whether you were a unemployed citizen, or a director in this organisation, or a designer, or a politician, we were all equal in that space and design enabled us to create those safe spaces, to have those conversations to, to create the empathy, to understand the different sort of constituencies, or the different people around the table. And, so there were you know, design interventions, but people didn't know it was design, you know, they just saw it as an experience.

4.2.1.3 Aligning values

By and large, achieving success in any collaborative undertaking is contingent upon having a clear goal and recognising the related values that underpin the vision for achieving the desired result. Likewise, the successful realisation of an intervention rests on the values that it espouses. For purposes of explaining this category, the word value is used to refer to the code of conduct that drives the intervention as well as the desired intervention consequences. Accordingly, 'aligning values' stems from the data that recognise that the four city actors are the foundation for the process of design citizenship to materialise as a social phenomenon. This category therefore considers the assemblage or mix of actors for a particular intervention in a way that the behaviour of the actors resonates with the values required to arrive at the desired outcome.

A distinction arose from my data between the perceived value and the real value of interventions and how it impacted on the grouping of actors for a particular intervention. Perceived value relates to the benefits actors think will come from participating in an intervention whereas real value is based on the actual experience derived from an actor participating in an intervention. As emphasised in the following excerpt, it is generally perceived value, drawn from previous experiences, which motivates the different mix of actors to get involved:

Rael: A couple of the ward projects had no people turn out, no community members arrived because they couldn't see the benefit of it. Or they had other things to do ... but I think it also, that there was quite an insight into a lot of, I think, South Africans maybe perception of, not perception of design but perceived ... Value of the design but not really understanding what it can do. Or that they kind of have a voice but also that the fact that they maybe need to earn money so rather they'd rather be out looking for a job than at a ward, you know, this co-design thing. Because how is that going to be beneficial? ... I think people are more likely to become active when they see results ... especially in SA where you know there's been so many provinces of so many things and people don't see results that there's far less. That there is almost a fatigue amongst people to engage because they don't see, they haven't seen any benefit in engagement. I mean, you know, where they toy-toying down a street or they sign a petition or whether you, you know, send it to local councillors or what have you, nothing happens. So people, I think a lot of people are disengaged.

Aligning values is an action/mindset that is not only limited to the conceptualisation and the beginning of an intervention, but also depends on the dimension of time where aligning values is directly proportional to the time spent engaging with interventions. To this end, the real value of the engagement may be recognised over a longer period of time; the value of using design to engage actors also stands to benefit from lengthier interventions and if realised, can contribute to a more democratic view of design amongst citizens at large:

Rael: So there's this. There's a ... and I have seen it in a few of the projects, is that sort of balance between immediate benefit and long-term benefit. And people's engagement in these co-design projects. And that's why I think the one or two day doesn't really work.

Fatima: So the time is definitely a factor to determine success?

Rael: Yeah. And it needs to evolve. It needs to unfold and you can't, that doesn't happen within a day or two. You need to generate ideas.

The values underpinning the design interventions are a reflection of the city actors who invest their time and effort in the intervention, and it is these values that motivate the city actors to plug into an intervention in terms of the value that the collaboration will bring. It was found that interventions that favour values such as tolerance, personal responsibility, respect, and making a difference are

drivers for more successful collaborations. Social entrepreneurship²⁶ is not excluded from this list of values, but is only a positive value when it is a driver for communal gain rather than personal, financial gain. The reference to communal gain speaks of entrepreneurial empowerment because it involves money being generated and fed back into the context where the needs can be addressed and possibly met.

Even though the alignment of values was not referred to as such by any of the actors interviewed, my data indicate that as a theoretical concept, it impacted on the implementation and sustainability of the interventions. In this regard, aligning values across the different groups of actors serves as intrinsic motivation for them to work towards making the intention of the intervention visible. In turn, this collaboration allowed for personal growth, increased understanding of other actors and also encouraged a more positive outlook on civic engagement. While some actors wanted to uphold the status quo in terms of adhering to a relatively standard (almost hierarchical) assemblage of key actors involved in an intervention, others were hopeful that a team in flux would allow new systems and ways of working. In terms of upholding the status quo, one concerned citizen lamented the lack of support specifically from government officials to address pertinent civic issues. The actor notes that support for interventions from government is necessary because its lack of action and involvement will have negative consequences for South Africa citizens. The social-justice issue that was being referred to in the excerpt below is the xenophobia that reached a critical point in South Africa in 2015 and which has since reared its ugly head again across the country:

Bruce: So, if the government is actually tacitly thinking that these, what is happening now is kind of okay and they want it to happen, they're not saying or never condone it, but they're letting it happen, nothing is gained out of it, nothing is gained. You know, the foreign nationals will continue to trade, they will come back, they will be a part of this society unless they are blocked in any way ... South Africans will have ousted people but they will come back. Government will have egg on its face but I mean it's actually all negative as a result of this if you look at it. How do we stop these things from happening because we play out in our mind, the consequences of letting things ...

The alignment of values in the above excerpt speaks to more than just the financial consequences that may be reaped from a specific collaboration. By aligning values and interests, the choice of city actors to collaborate with, seems to lend credibility or perceived value to the work of non-

²⁶ Markussen (2017) distinguishes social design from social innovation and social entrepreneurship. According to him, social entrepreneurship is seen to be coupled with a business approach; as such, social entrepreneurship's public engagement is linked to market performance. He asserts that "[t]his is rarely the case in social design, where the aim is to more humbly foster social change to meet the needs on a micro-level for marginal groups or minorities" (Markussen 2017:161).

governmental organisations and activist movements. One actor felt that the other actors with seemingly more authority are also needed in the intervention assemblage to ensure that the intervention is aligned with that which is safe as well as lawful.

Cindy: I think, the lessons that I learned ... was quite positive in the way that we went out very early in the morning, or late at night actually, I think it's good to get a head start ... to get ... the right people to collaborate or to get their interest, or to get them involved as well ... 'cause it's great to have people that have more authority than you involved ... to do the legal side of stuff, or the admin side of stuff ...

In many instances noted by the city actors, the reasons why confident corporates and government officials get on board are often self-serving in terms of having a presence in the community and engaging with citizens, albeit superficially. Hence, the alignment of values is essentially a challenging relationship between actors that needs to be carefully managed to ensure that the intervention is for the common good. Hence, in contrast to the above viewpoint of maintaining the status quo, the following actor presents a favourable view on a redistribution of key actors when aligning values for purposes of design interventions. According to this actor, when government puts forward funding, the assumption of the other actors is that the government officials assume the decision-making, which may compromise the intended inclusive process:

Rael: I think even when the community is the client, they are not necessarily, in fact they are not the client. It's almost like how parents buy toys for their kids. The parents are the clients. The kids are the ones who get the things in the end.

Fatima: That's a good analogy.

Rael: But in fact it is the parent who is the one who is parting with the money. Who is making the decision. Yes or No? Is it going to be useful for you or not? It's the parents' values that get given to the kids because they're the ones who hold the money. It's a similar thing within the informal settlements or community based projects where local government is the one funding the project and then they're the ones who make the decisions. Although you do get feedback through the project in a feedback that goes back up to government. It's still the purse strings and so the citizens are never really the client because government can say, you might come up with a solution that fits the context, and fits the citizens but requires funding.

When a collaboration is one-sided, with one actor giving and the other actor(s) being on the receiving end, then an intervention leans towards a parochial relationship with non-aligned actor values. This creates a barrier for engagement and calls into question the intention of an intervention; the question that arises in this instance is: whose values are being promoted? The

jargon used to speak about the interventions by the four different groups of actors provided cues for understanding the alignment of values in a particular instance of activism. From his own experience, one actor alluded to finding it problematic when interventions are approached more like business models by any of the city actors: *"I think that's a constant ... ethical dilemma that designers face, is activism doesn't pay in a lot of senses ..."* (Rael).

Following from this skewed collaboration that may arise from maintaining the status quo in terms of aligning actor values, participants felt that it is better to create new assemblages of actors with newly aligned values. The following excerpt speaks to this viewpoint:

Rael: Now that is something ... you can ... and that's what happens with government funded projects. You empower people within existing systems but you don't facilitate emancipation beyond that.

Fatima: How do you move beyond that?

Rael: So that happens I think from the bottom up because that's when you design your own systems that suit you. It's not necessarily having more say within existing systems. Erm, and government has their systems in place and they're very, and they don't really like changing them very much because it involves far too much work or what have you.

Another actor also expressed a favourable response to creating new systems and structures of engagement instead of maintaining the status quo:

Didi: You kind of step outside of your ... social framework that you kind of have put upon yourself or that the world has put upon you. Or the social construct. And I find that to be very powerful and I am curious to see how this encourages people to play more. Really.

Despite the political tensions that may arise from a traditional and hierarchical alignment of values, I found that the sustainability and longevity of the interventions are largely dependent on financial resources. To this end, the success of interventions seems to rest on the financial support of organisations and/or individuals. Actors consequently expressed their uncertainty about interventions not being self-sustaining; their dependence on external funding may result in interventions getting caught up in a system that maintains existing power structures. For this reason, the following actor expressed scepticism about the reliance of interventions on stakeholders who may not see an intervention through and leave the participants and communities in the lurch.

Rael: I think ... one of the aspects is definitely that it should be results driven. A lot of the projects that we've seen now is what immediate benefits can be implemented because the length of a design project as well, because you don't know at the end whether you're still going to have funding. Of course a

lot of these participatory design or collaborative projects are funded externally. And so then negotiated between the community and whoever is involved but the issue with funding is that the plug can get pulled and community is left...

From the above, it is clear that there has to be a core relationship between the city actors. This relationship is beneficial if it is driven by values such as accountability and trust; these values are also nurtured and honed through the experience of working together. For example, actors who worked together and helped other actors to facilitate their Cool Capital interventions enabled the actors to understand their own expectations of their interventions and influenced the decisions taken. Help took the form of both time and tangible resources and was regarded as an underpinning approach to the design process:

George: So I moved on towards actually thinking of how I'm gonna get this done. So ... I sat down with my lecturer, she talked to me about ways, about materials, things that I could do, and she – I think the best part about it was that she, she promised me engagement from ... all the others, like my peers, my colleagues, she said we'll all do this. Because I mean this, this project was about all of us helping each other. It wasn't about just oh, you do your own project, you're gonna get marked for that, and that be that, then that person does theirs.

The values that were applied for interventions were not limited to people but extended to the place of an intervention as well. Actors were very mindful about respecting public space and adopting a sensitive approach to the environment in which they worked. The need to be considerate did not go unnoticed in the following reflection:

Cindy: We weren't really defacing it ... we didn't try to bash it in any way ...

Aligning values does not reinforce the respective roles of the city actors as being exclusive; instead, it enables broader application of values across the different groups of actors. It is motivating for all city actors – designers and non-designers – when intention is made visible in a way that aligns with expectations as well as values. Aligning values also allows actors to participate in multiple capacities over time – for example, a driven designer may have been involved behind the scenes, but during an intervention the driven designer also operates as a concerned citizen, and thereby embraces and displays a civic outlook in addition to a professional stance.

In this sense, aligning values has the potential to become more inclusive; thereby, it also favours a more democratic leadership approach in that any of the actors can exhibit and apply their leadership qualities to hold together the specific intervention values. As a result, this alignment of values is not

merely operational but it is tactical and strategic too in order to ensure that the collaboration is not short-lived and can be sustainable by means of financial and human support. In this regard, one of the challenges identified is to move design activism beyond a level of volunteerism and beyond a proposal level towards actual implementation.

On a personal level, the way that actors spoke about their roles indicated that they did not separate their professional values from their personal values when engaging with people in a community setting. The idea of driven designers playing an educator's role to massage difficult conversations, as explained in the previous category, suggests that there should also be an alignment of personal and professional values to inform a value-based framework for design activism. It follows then that that aligning values is a balancing act between professional and personal values to create a context that is conducive to civic engagement and action. The alignment of good design values, such as cultural appropriateness, may also aid in the long term to develop and nurture a culture of design in South Africa.

4.3 Processes of design citizenship

This section, which unpacks the processes of design citizenship, interprets the city actors' actions and emotions conceptually, as well as the conditions that are conducive to nurturing their civic competencies through design activism. To reiterate, the city actors are the foundation for design citizenship to exist as a social phenomenon. In order for the phenomenon to materialise, however, there are related processes that refer to the procedures and flow of citizenship activities over time and space.

In the same way that I drew on personas to explain the key city actors in the previous section, I now turn to another design research method, namely user journeys, to present the processes of design citizenship. Mears (2013) defines a user journey as

- a series of steps (typically 4-12) which represent a scenario in which a user might interact with the thing you are designing. They can be used for 2 main things:
 - Demonstrating the way users currently interact with the service / website / product
 - Demonstrating the way users could interact with the service / website / product.

For purposes of this research, the format and purpose of a user journey were adapted as a way of collectively mapping the city actors' journey through the processes of design citizenship. As such, a diagram is used to illustrate the process of design citizenship and the supporting narrative describes a scenario, that is the actors' experiences and interactions in their own words. Since design activism

and citizenship are both constituted in interactions between citizens, this diagram helps to highlight the distinct 'touch points' that prompt strong feelings/attitudes and/or actions among the key actors. The user journey can therefore be read as type of an experience map of the phenomenon. To this end, the user journey defines the core categories of the phenomenon and how they interface with one another (under ideal circumstances), but on closer inspection theoretical variance can be gleaned in the individual accounts of experience of each of the personas.

From the rich data that were generated, it emerged that there is not only one basic social process of design citizenship. Instead, the process can be represented in a cone shape to depict a funnel of action and experience that goes from general to more specific civic engagement and citizenship experiences over time. While the overarching categories outline the process, it should be highlighted that since this is a substantive theory, the dominant behaviour of the actors is presented as a scenario; their behaviour is not definitive because the actors not only respond to design citizenship, but their actions simultaneously also shape the phenomenon.

Even though the processes of design citizenship do not have a set beginning and end time, the experiential effects on the key actors were found to build on one another and were experienced sequentially, hence the funnel shape to visualise the processes of design citizenship over time. The reason for this chronological unfolding of actions and feelings is dependent on the motivation of the four actors. In turn, an actor's motivation depends on whether the platform for engagement is designed in such a way that its short-term goals can have far-reaching consequences and can lead to sustained civic engagement and application of civic values.

The way the different actors move through the processes of design citizenship also depends largely on their personal willingness to engage and introspect. In the oft-quoted words of Galileo, "You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him to find it within himself". Accordingly, the platforms for engagement can be deemed as being successful when they can instil good civic values in all actors through experience and subsequently get them to act according to these values. This means that citizens need to become conscious of their own civic behaviour through engaging in design interventions and reflecting-in-action and reflecting-on-action. Therefore, moving through the processes of design citizenship is at once a collective process but also a very personal one; it is a journey that begins with self-awareness, moves on to self-analysis and action, and may eventually lead to self-actualisation. Ultimately, the intrinsic motivation for actors to go through the processes of design citizenship is if they gain something from each. The three basic social processes of the

phenomenon of design citizenship that are detailed in the sections below include 'awakening awareness', 'igniting agency' and 'sustaining a design thinking impetus'.

4.3.1 Awakening awareness

The theoretical category of 'awakening awareness' does not refer to an action but, rather, an experience that a city actor undergoes when plugging in' and subsequently participating in a design intervention. At face value, the labelling of this category may connote a spiritual awakening but, while the effects are not about spiritual transcendence, there is still a metaphorical link with this phrase; the focus of this initial process of design citizenship is for the different actors to have a better, more informed, and more conscious understanding of numerous personal and social issues. The view that understanding a situation is used as an opening to awake awareness is evident in the following excerpt by two actors, affiliated with the Coalition:

Fatima: Did it [the intervention] get people to engage, like citizens to start speaking?

Malwande: Yes.

Fatima: Do you want to just expand a little on that? Or sorry, maybe just share like an experience why you're saying yes.

Malwande: Okay, I would say yes, because, many people, they do not know what they can do. If no one comes and try to educate them about their rights, to open, their mouths in the right way, they will stay into that dark, into that dirty ... Not knowing that they must stand up and fight for their rights.

Xoliswa: And then to add from what Malwande said, really, our organisation does that, the duty that we did on a daily basis, the work that we are doing, sometimes used to have some events where you show our community members how to clean our areas. We used to call it Clean Up campaign, where each and every member would go to a certain area to clean up that area. By doing that, we are trying to show our community that the places that we are staying in, we must keep it clean, each and every time. That's what we are doing as an NGO.

City actors often serve as role models for other citizens to create awareness of issues, including but not limited to social justice concerns, the role of design, personal circumstances and context.

Awareness in this context therefore operates on multiple levels – it refers to becoming aware of design as well as becoming aware of one's civic rights. For example, most actors recognised that there is a lack of understanding about design that tends to create a barrier for further engagement by citizens. Nonetheless, if and when this barrier is overcome, civic participation has a greater chance to ensue. Despite the collective nature of design interventions, when actors move through the processes to awaken their awareness, they experience the process individually and hence,

subjectively. Their experiences are largely shaped by their life experiences as well as their current context. As the following actor notes, participation in an intervention is voluntary, and concerned citizens are not coerced into doing something that they do not want to:

Alexia: Yeah, and what was really important for me is that err, that like, you know, it's one of the few times that I'm kind of like, it's completely voluntary, you know, like if you don't want to do it, you don't have to do it. And if you don't like it, and that's really, I like that about it. Because, you know, photography obviously, I don't photograph people who don't want to be photographed. But there is this element on the street of the people you photograph, but there isn't like this surrendering ...

The above excerpt also raises a pertinent point that there is not just one creative medium of communication for promotion and awareness purposes. While Alexia uses photography as her preferred medium, having been trained professionally in the discipline, other city actors who take on a facilitating role draw on their own design skills and creative resources. Some interventions as part of City Walk Saturday (in Cape Town) saw the use of physical additions to the built environment – such as interactive typographic notes on bollards – whereas in some of the Cool Capital interventions (in Pretoria), language was used creatively as a way to create awareness in a public space. For example, dialogue was encouraged amongst Pretoria citizens by city actors inserting messages in creative ways such as “you’re welcome” and “hello there” (Figure 5) in public spaces. Hence, even though interventions may take on different forms, the commonality is that they aim to question the status quo and disrupt a public space via an aesthetic experience.



Figure 5: Hello there (shadow stencil), Cool Capital, Pretoria 2014 (photograph by researcher).

Another public platform that is sometimes used to create awareness is social media and its applications such as Facebook and Instagram. One participant expressed his “... *hope to see more of it in social media even*” (George). Increasingly, social media engagement is used to gauge the response to an intervention; this gauge depends on anecdotal evidence, which is aided by ‘like’ buttons and the facility to share comments with other users. As a result, an intervention’s online presence has the potential to encourage dialogue on a broader scale, allows interventions to bridge geographic locations, and also serves as a log of interventions, which may be consulted as a reference or even a directory for actors wanting to initiate and/or drive future interventions.

Despite creating awareness at a collective level (both on the ground and online), it is essential to note that awakening awareness is not akin to encouraging consensus amongst city actors. Nonetheless, increased visibility of an intervention, as well as sustained exposure to an intervention, have the potential to affect one’s understanding of the intervention and the related social issue(s). A better understanding of topical issues has the potential to impact on an actor’s awareness and subsequently, through a process of critical reflection of the aesthetic experience, may alter the actor’s viewpoint and opinion. More significantly, the conceptual realisation gleaned from my rich data is that awakening awareness facilitates the process for actors to recognise that as a citizen they have a voice.

In keeping with the aforementioned idea of plugging in being conceptualised as a learning encounter, awakening awareness can be regarded as an experiential extension of this informal learning encounter. While the various actors acknowledge awareness as a required point of departure towards activism and desired change, there was also the realisation that mere awareness is not sufficient on its own to create social change. Hence, the category of awakening awareness must be viewed in conjunction with the two subsequent categories of the processes of design citizenship, namely ‘igniting agency’ and ‘sustaining a design thinking impetus’. However, before explaining how the three overarching procedural categories of design citizenship build on one another, the two sub-categories – ‘suspending oneself’ and ‘finding common ground through shared experience’ – are examined theoretically to elucidate the process of awakening awareness.

4.3.1.1 Suspending oneself

Once concerned citizens find themselves ready to contribute, they move from consuming to participating when they realise that an intervention is not just “*an event that someone is hosting*”

(Didi). Subsequently, their reluctance evolves into a keenness, which encourages participation and accordingly they begin to experience the intervention through the act of suspending themselves.

Here, the act of suspending denotes the act of letting go and, more specifically, letting go of one's inhibitions. The data show that an actor's sense of curiosity, especially the concerned citizens', facilitates this willingness to suspend oneself. Moreover, the act of suspending oneself stems from an actor's innate ability to plug in and play. Play allows actors to move away from their default thoughts and actions and to suspend their judgement, disbelief and even their preconceived ideas about design and/or the social issue under examination. The actions that were identified from the various actors' explanations of their experiences are akin to a specific type of play, namely creative play. Creative play takes on many forms – making, unmaking and even remaking – owing to its emphasis on uninhibited self-expression. Hence, by its very nature, this type of play allows citizens to explore their feelings either by themselves or with other citizens without the pressure of being judged, because there is no right or wrong when it comes to creative play. One actor elaborates on this power of play by explaining how a person is more open to doing things in new ways and in unfamiliar groups as a result:

Didi: there's something so powerful about playing with one another. And it sounds so like wishy-washy and whatever but I genuinely think that, you know, when you play you kind of, you take something off. It's like you're not so attached to being a black, young black female. That falls away; you're literally just somebody who is involved so involved in this game and your objective is to get from point A to point B or to get all the letters used. You kind of step outside of your social framework that you kind of have put upon yourself or that the world has put upon you. Or the social construct. And I find that to be very powerful and I am curious to see how this encourages people to play more. Really.

By suspending one's disbelief, actors become fully immersed in an intervention. To this end, an actor's awareness is awakened through intuitively feeling his/her way through an intervention instead of being hindered by rational responses; this implies emotional responses and not merely intellectual ones. The emphasis on intuition does not disregard the role of critical thinking as part of an intervention, but it allows actors to start using play and imagination to experience an intervention in a more visceral way. On a cognitive level, the act of playing facilitates a shift in intention from one of knowing to one of learning, which allows one room to grow.

On a personal level, I also experienced the act of subconsciously suspending myself when attending my first City Walk Saturday in Cape Town. Upon reflection, I realised that I had suspended myself first as a citizen and then, second, as a design researcher in the field. Owing to the constructivist

nature of this study's methodology, my own experience of suspension is shared below as part of my dialogue with another city actor:

Fatima: I think what was very interesting for me experiencing it was also how on an ordinary day walking in the city, how I may not have interacted with the mimes. It was actually quite a funny story but I was walking with a friend and she's always been keen to play the drums and I thought as part of all of this, I wasn't sure if it was part of Open, I mean the City Walk itself, but I went up to someone sitting with a drum and I couldn't at first understand when I began speaking to her why she was not responding ... And then it suddenly dawned on me that she's a mime [laugh].

Didi: Ohhhh [chuckle].

Fatima: So, but secondly also, I think going in with that mindset that today is for engagement I went up to someone so unassumingly to say, please show us how to play the drums which I think may not have happened had there not been an event of sorts. So, you know, it's almost that mindset that if there is something also it's a platform to engage whereas if it wasn't, I am not sure how likely I would have been to ...

Didi: Just walk up to someone ...

Fatima: Just walk up to someone. So, it didn't quite work but it got me thinking about just engaging on a personal level ...

In keeping with my own experience of speaking to the mime with the intention of learning, another actor had the following to say about his unusual experience of engaging:

Tjaart: [different] people who'd, who would normally just walk by each other and ignore one another. So there were a lot of, a lot more engagement in that space between random people ... it was a complete positive vibe and I ... actually being a major introvert, I wouldn't normally speak to anybody on the street, I actually engaged. So, it was a big transformation for me as well.

Consequent to my aforementioned experience, I watched a group of city actors playing giant Scrabble on the same day in Cape Town's Company Gardens (Figure 6). Since my own experience had heightened my awareness of the public's responses to the City Walk events, I took greater note of the way actors interacted with one another while playing the word game in a public space. Actors who did not know one another previously were very willing to engage collectively and camaraderie seemed to be nurtured through playing together in a "suspension mode" (Bruce) where "people can think differently and suspend their judgement" (Bruce).



Figure 6: Word play, City Walk Saturdays, Cape Town 2015 (photograph by researcher).

This same approach of playing and participating in a ‘suspension mode’ was evident in other actors’ experiences of design interventions, such as the Design Storms in Cape Town and the Cool Capital projects in Pretoria. Suspending oneself in different groups allowed constant movement and in turn did not allow thoughts, ideas and relationships to stagnate during the initial process of design citizenship. Suspending oneself also breaks the mould of becoming too comfortable and allowed actors to move away from their default network; this meant that all actors participating in the design interventions were taken out of their comfort zones and any engagement barriers between them were also suspended (for example, between designers and non-designers). These suspension-related sentiments of engaging in new constellations are clearly articulated in the following excerpt:

Marc: And then the second thing is that between different modules, between modules, people are getting reshuffled. They are never sitting in the same group for longer than one hour and that has a few, important effects or advantages. And one is that you know, you may have heard the iron law of oligarchy, meaning over time in every group, somehow, some hierarchy is established. And we don't want that to persist and to become too strong because then we get the political animals and the people with the very strong ego. They start dominating but if we constantly reshuffle the groups then these structures are constantly getting shaken up again or broken down and people may be someone feels uncomfortable in one group already after an hour, they get reshuffled into a new group. So we create constant opportunity for people to find themselves in different groups and to kind of reposition themselves and even if you're unhappy with one constellation, an hour later, you're going to be in a different constellation and you're going to be more happy in that one or more comfortable. That is one thing. The second thing is, we create a network; a web of relationships. So, you sit with 7 people for one hour and then with 7 people for the next hour and you

constantly change your relationships so that we can somehow create a very dense network of relationships which is giving people a lot of comfort and safety as well...

And the third thing is that we kind of break up the usual suspects who usually sit together in almost a little conspiracy so we have ways to randomly mix up people and through that, they need to reposition themselves but they're also liberated from their peer group almost, from their gang, their acquaintances or so and they can articulate in their group. And lastly their ideas get constantly shared. So I learnt something or I come to an idea in one group and that group may be 8 people and they may have a brilliant idea and we break up that group and that idea gets carried forward into 8 different new groups with 8 more people. So already, after 2 hours, 64 people may have heard about an idea.

Being in a suspension mode is inadvertently also a celebration of a given space. Similar to playing creatively without any guiding principles, actors do not have a concern for normative social etiquette given the ephemeral nature of the intervention, which is not bound by rigid structures or by dictates of the outcome of the engagement. The following excerpt illustrates these viewpoints:

Bruce: Yeah, well I think the big challenge is to allow or to create a space where people can think differently and suspend their judgement, or suspend their typical process and designers are very good at following out and doing things without too much reflection or too much forethought ... getting designers and non-designers alike to actually kind of play in that suspension mode and that listening mode and that storytelling mode is the key component of working with citizens and working with designers around the table. And then really, kind of, exploring the possible ideas that emerge out of that conducive space is obviously the next step. So, I mean it's very similar to the design thinking kind of modes.

Fatima: It's more process-oriented.

Bruce: Yeah, but it's also an iterative and a backwards and forwards process so there's no real kind of one given way of actually doing this but I think the suspension mode upfront is a critical way of allowing people and encouraging them to actually move away from typical, habitual ... modes of thinking.

Fatima: So then do you think that the interventions influenced citizen engagement and participation and if so, more or less, can you maybe elaborate how this was done?

Bruce: Yeah, I think that, I mean this is not something new. It's clearly something that has been done, you know, for decades now and in different parts of the world and there are various methodologies and numerous toolkits, you know, that promote this way of thinking and way of doing. And I think that it's been important for people in Cape Town to experiment and to test and

try these approaches. People are obviously finding that it is quite hard work. It's not something that is easy to do. It is hard to facilitate and it can be time-consuming. It can be very frustrating when you work with the city, for example, in bureaucratic institutions, with lots of red tape. So there's the politics and there's the blame game that can often derail solutions in the making. But I think that what we've done is experimented quite a lot with these methodologies and we're kind of still talking about design activism here, but maybe more so towards design thinking as a process. But I think that the activist stance always lies, always is an undercurrent or a thread that runs through this kind of work. Because, activism to my mind is about doing things differently from the norm and, you know, these processes are good because it's to let go of the norm.

4.3.1.2 Finding common ground through shared experiences

The act/experience of suspending oneself facilitates the ability of actors to share experiences with one another. This leads to the process of finding common ground, which is essentially a communication process that aids the recognition of awakening awareness. To this end, this communication process that occurs during an intervention focuses on negotiating one's own position as a citizen. This negotiation of self extends to grappling with interpersonal dynamics between citizens in a public setting. In the words of one actor, *"there starts being these shared experiences and acknowledgement that the city belongs as much to a rough sleeper as it does to somebody who works in the city and pays taxes, etc."* (Mike). This realisation speaks to the fact that public spaces start becoming more comfortable for actors during an intervention.

As such, immersion in an intervention has the potential to bridge gaps in age, race, culture and also geographic location:

Mike: Look, I mean for me that is such an exciting opportunity that these types of engagements. They're kind of disruptive in a way in that they force engagement across differences. So, be it economic, be it you know race lines, gender, whatever it is. And particularly given the current issues that we're experiencing around xenophobia and so on, if we're creating more opportunities way for engagement in a non-threatening environment, in an environment where people feel equally invested and with equal agency ... and as you're saying, like those Scrabble interactions, you have people from all walks of life feeling like they could engage and get involved. And the idea is to create a myriad of those opportunities, be it a kid's jumping castle, where you have children interacting as a result, their folks are interacting too. And Scrabble, food, you know, music, so creating opportunities for the differences to sort of fall away and an equal footing for engagement.

Another actor recognised the influential role of designers to facilitate a bridging process:

Tjaart: I think that the power we have to, or designers have to actually persuade people and change their mindset can actually ... break down the barriers between religion, race, and social class and all that kind of thing, those kinds of things.

For example, in terms of bridging age gaps, both the Coalition and the Feast of the Clowns managed to bring parents and children together and in tune with one another. From my experience on the ground during the data generation process, children seemed to have less scepticism and barriers towards participating. One parent to whom I spoke to during the Feast of the Clowns said the following in this regard:

Mpho: The kids don't even know each other but as they hook up together, it's just like hey bra ... they're not like us you know ... they're not like us.

Children's ability to suspend themselves during an intervention more readily was also clearly highlighted:

Marcela: We had tons of kids! 'Cause you don't have to lobby kids, you know, kids just need to see [chuckle] fun stuff happening on the street ...

The children's enthusiasm had a ripple effect by encouraging adult actors to spend more time at an intervention and eventually to follow their children's lead in terms of sharing and displaying affection:

Mpho: The queues are long for the face painting but because of the kids you wait ... they are really enjoying it.

The motivation to immerse oneself in an intervention and its related activities therefore stems from a vested personal interest, be it for oneself or for showing affection towards a loved one who is nearby. A couple of actors articulated this sentiment by noting that taking a personal interest during an intervention is "*a labour of love*" (Marcela) and that it's "... *having a good heart about it*" (Cindy). This sentiment about interventions eliciting emotional responses is captured in the following excerpt:

Marcela: And the response is, you know, people have, have a sense of freedom, and you know, how amazing is it that kids can run around and parents don't have to worry, and you know, there's, so the, the, the response is very ... not only positive but I find it quite ... I don't know how to explain it; it's not being intellectual, I guess it's what I'm saying, it just comes from the heart in many ways, you know... it's very much about, it's not so much about 'oh, you know, the use of the car and ... you know, there's no sort of thoughts process involved, I mean a lot of the responses were very much from the gut ...

Irrespective of the driving force behind participation, the collective experiences that stemmed from dialogue on a shared interest, progressed into the act of finding a shared humanity across different races and cultures. This trajectory of understanding and feeling resulted in the creation of a common ground amongst all actors; arriving at a common ground helps to highlight similarities instead of differences between the actors. Some of the similarities include ways of doing, thinking and also feeling; in particular, there are many shared hopes amongst citizens for better living conditions and experiences in the cities. To this end, the intervention experience gave actors an opportunity to start discussing difficult topics such as spatial discomfort and a fractured past (in light of the legacy of apartheid in South Africa), and it is through these discussions that life experiences and trials came to the fore as common, relatable human challenges. Relatable experiences therefore assisted in providing citizens with a level playing field where their awareness can be awakened and/or heightened in a more meaningful way. This is demonstrated in the following excerpts:

Rike: I mean one of the, one of the biggest things that needs to happen in, in the South African context is the ... spatial, I mean the, the, apartheid was a spatial project, so the spatial project needs to be dismantled.

Tshepang: It has been tough to get crowds from the suburbs, the east of Pretoria, south of Pretoria, to come and be a part of this day, because for them town is one of those scary areas. So that's what we, while trying to raise a social issue, we've also been trying to break the stigma

During an intervention, actors slowly began to realise that their feelings are not exclusive, irrespective of their social or financial standing. For example, many actors realised that historic relationships with both people and places in South Africa were social constructs and myths, which were reinforced through law. At the same time that feelings of belonging started to emerge amongst actors, feelings and experiences of discomfort also surfaced. These disruptions allowed actors to put themselves in other citizens' shoes. The following excerpt presents a first-hand experience of the subsequent feelings of having one's assumptions disrupted:

Bruce: Well, I think the first phase, the observation phase, and that listening phase was quite extraordinary. It was winter, it was cold, you know, we were in the informal settlements actually walking up to our ankles in water so that was a moment of civic engagement that really kind of, the wool came off the eyes of a lot of people.

Fatima: That's interesting.

Bruce: There's nothing quite like that first-hand, primary experience to, you know, to get people to start thinking about the situation as though it is affecting them on a daily basis ... and to, you know, really feel, you need to actually

feel the discomfort in some way ... Yeah, and you can only really experiment once you've actually felt something, something's bitten you or you've hurt yourself. Or you've felt the trauma of the tension that exists in a space. It might be to do with solid waste, it might be to do with rape, it might be to do with early childhood development, it doesn't matter. You've actually sensed from the community and the space that you're in, the kind of the high stakes of that issue. Because I think that you cannot replicate that, you can't read about it and be motivated to do something about it.

The heightened awareness of similarities allowed actors to overcome perceptions and to debunk commonly held assumptions. The data generated for this study point towards the following types of topics that were considered in a new light by actors during and after their engagement with a design intervention:

- national history and its effects on placemaking (use and safety to name a couple);
- the understanding of design that extends beyond a designed artefact;
- the power of verbal communication; and
- current national policies and regulations.

Overcoming/changing perceptions is facilitated through collective engagement during an intervention, but also reflecting independently on one's own actions as well as those of others. Accordingly, overcoming perceptions can be the result of an intervention or the motivating factor behind an intervention. For example, one Cool Capital intervention in Pretoria was intended to address citizens' fears about a specific space in a positive manner. The driven designer who conceptualised this particular intervention, said the following:

Tjaart: So what I wanted to do is just to change that fear into something positive ... I wanted to be more active and engage more with the public and the environment and just change ... change conceptions ... conventional ideas that people had about space.

Overall, the opportunities for self-reflection that the design interventions awarded to actors made them more aware of *"the public and society and how we get along with one another and ... how we communicate"* (Tjaart). Furthermore, the result of finding common ground serves as a reminder for all actors; these reminders allow them to become more mindful in developing a sense of understanding of other actors and taking responsibility for their actions:

George: So actually you remember, and that was quite funny because I was like, wow ... it says quite a lot about how, how people take these projects and what they, I suppose what they assume when they see a lot of people around something and a gathering. I also thought the nice element about my project was adding the little ... kind of scholar patrol, sign with the two people who

stopped the cars. Just for that extra assurance for the people crossing the road. I remember that helped a lot ... so that you'd see these cars slow down, they'd read the signs; you'd see a little smile on a, a lot of the drivers' faces. Like oh, oh, this is going on, this is going on. And then the people who'd walk by, they would also have a little laugh you know. They'd see oh, wow, this is, this is great, this is crazy. Is this for us, in particular? ... essentially what I wanted to get out of it was to get that type of, that type of reaction from people that, you know, these type of things need to be addressed, hopefully this will, this will lead to something, something extremely helpful, like the addition of a pedestrian crossing or improved safety on those roads, or something along those lines. But that's essentially what we all want to achieve in that sense. And ... that was definitely what I took. I mean that's ex-, that's essentially what I took from that day ... that activation day. But it was, it was about that reminder. That was the, the key word for me: a reminder of all these things. Because somehow somewhere along the way, you just get numb to the fact that, you know, pedestrians need to cross the road and it's quite dangerous and people get hurt. Oh, I remember ... our lecturer telling us about two incidents which she saw where people got ... knocked over at that exact spot, and ... how dangerous it was. I mean, for me it's like wow! You know I didn't even notice some, a lot of the time I don't even experience this for myself but I mean it's, it's happening. So ... it was that, that great reminder ... which I thought was the most significant part about that whole activity. And even now I mean, when I drive by places and I see people cross the roads, I always just look at the robot, I look to see if that green man is on, I look to see who is crossing. It's quite funny ... I have a conscious acknowledgement of these things now and I'm, I guess the only thing I can attribute it to is that activation. It really made me more aware of this ...

Fatima: *So it sounds like it really got you to reflect on yourself as a citizen ... do I understand correctly?*

George: *That is absolutely correct, that is exactly what it is; and I am never, like I never assumed it would do that. I mean, like looking back at things in retrospect I thought it was just gonna be this project where we do something fun, and it's more about the message being sent towards other people. But it means at the same time it actually tells you, like it actually helps you learn messages as well. It helps you learn very important facts and remember things. So, I mean looking back at it now, it definitely taught me a lot, I mean I can definitely say that it helped me more, be more conscious about ... like the rules and regulations of the road and what not.*

According to another actor, the discussions during an intervention also allow for “*spin-off conversations*” (Didi), which keeps the communication momentum going between different assemblages of actors even after an intervention. Ultimately, through a dialogic process, actors have

an opportunity to tackle previous and current struggles, while concurrently projecting their thoughts by means of exploring design ideas towards a shared future vision.

Danielle: It's heart-driven, you can't, you can't design that kind of process, it needs to be there. It needs to be inspired and I think my role, as a designer, is to inspire people to be their best, you know. And all the processes that I create it's all about understanding people actually and being able to design processes around these people that allow them to engage together in a way that they create something awesome at the end. You know. Just through that engagement. And I think that that's what experiential design is – it's like how do you design an experience? You know? It's by understanding people and having your heart in the right place and making sure that everybody's got a common vision and a common goal and this is all self-organising structures ... There's always a common vision, there's always a common goal, there's always a common understanding and it's that common understanding that makes all the difference. It creates either success or failure – a common understanding.

In this way, the transformative experience of awakening awareness births a new, shared culture that promotes a “*shared humanism*” (Bruce) that encourages reflection and begins to instil a sense of empathy:

Mike: It's just broadened my perspective and you know, I mean, one uses the word empathy, I think empathy for me is a strong word. Increased engagement with people across differences ... and you know, having opportunity for reflection, I think results in empathy, increased empathy. And in a society as layered as ours, I think people being respectful of one another ... maybe not being able to fully understand each other's perspectives, it's very difficult to do that but just trying to understand those perspectives more, and I think just allows for a society that just kind of breathes, takes a breath before it reacts.

As evident in my data, initial exposure to design interventions generally motivates sustained action by the actors. It helps them to recognise the potential that collective action may have, and also encourages the non-designer actors to recognise the role that design can play in this. From a driven designer's perspective, the opinion is that evidence of change is what will ensure subsequent buy-in for design-related activities. Hence, the overarching aim of this group of actors is to make design accessible to the public and to confidently put it in the public domain with a view towards creating change for the common good. Driven designers therefore recognise that they have the ability to break down barriers and approach difficult subjects by way of their interventions. In this way, changed perceptions, as a result of finding common ground, have the capacity to get actors to start interrogating existing narratives. The popular notion that ‘seeing is believing’ therefore begins to take shape; it hinges on the actors' needs for tangible evidence. In terms of thought processes, this approach/need remains at a level of science thinking during this initial process of the phenomenon

of design citizenship. Nonetheless, through a first-hand experience to awaken awareness, actors begin to see how the contribution of design towards social change is not just focused on aesthetics and so-called pretty pictures, but rather on a proactive and pragmatic mindset. Direct engagement also allows concerned citizens to find common ground in their views about public space, seeing the spaces as less threatening and more welcoming. Through the facilitation of seeing tangible results, all actors' perceptions are challenged immediately. In turn, the actors acknowledged that once they had experienced a design intervention, they were generally more prompted to participate and interact at another opportunity. This experiential motivation elicited positive responses such as *"I would definitely do that again"* (Cindy).

4.3.2 Igniting agency

The process of igniting agency has the potential to advance the design citizenship process for actors once their awareness has been awakened. This means that in order to concretise any newfound awareness, actors need to be proactive and make visible their understanding through their subsequent actions. Despite this process being central to the design citizenship process, acting on one's awareness is not a given progression from the point of becoming aware. One actor, who worked on an intervention in Cape Town, responded to this notion by stating:

Marcela: We never sell it [an intervention] as the panacea you know for the very many different challenges the city has, we just say this is an opportunity to start a conversation. The work really needs to happen before and after ... we see it as kind of the trigger of something.

Hence, awakening awareness is a trigger for civic action, but it does not guarantee it. A great deal of work needs to be put in by the key actors to ensure that there is sufficient motivation for all actors to pursue the design citizenship trajectory. A sense of despondency often hinders citizens from taking action; this stems from a lack of seeing tangible outcomes following acts of traditional activism. However, for those concerned citizens who move beyond mere awareness, there are two sub-categories, which characterise the process of igniting agency, namely 'taking risks' and 'presenting an alternate narrative'.

The term 'agency' is traditionally related to the disciplines of philosophy and psychology and refers to one's capacity to act. The term can also be considered from a sociological point of view where it is regarded as an action that is inextricably linked to decision-making. It is this sociological understanding that shapes the use of the term for this conceptual category of design citizenship. Accordingly, agency denotes that citizens need to be mindful of the consequences of their actions.

Hence, igniting agency can be understood as a form of subjective awareness, with accountability and responsibility as the key values underpinning it.

Looking beyond the operational nature of this category, a clear distinction can be made between awakening awareness and igniting agency. While awakening awareness targets actors primarily on a collective level where new knowledge is acquired through observation or direct participation with one another, igniting agency concerns the individual behaviour of actors and is therefore more inward-looking. In this context, citizens strive for personal development and use the intervention as a platform for praxis. Pragmatically, the process of igniting agency sparks reflection and encourages actors to get in touch with their-inner selves, which then facilitates intentional action in response (accordingly, they are referred to as ‘key city actors’, to denote their active their involvement in the design interventions). One actor’s experience reiterates the process of individual reflection:

Mike: Yeah, it sort of created a moment for personal reflection rather than opportunities to engage with your fellow citizens. The games, by their nature, create those opportunities, call for those opportunities because it's even if you're standing on the side-line, you can provide a bit of input or advice or whatever. And when there's a giant chess game going on or, so yeah, I think it's also important with these things to just, to create those layers. The personal reflection is important around issues too. And then opportunities to discuss and debate, etcetera ...

Igniting agency, as a theoretical concept, is therefore about actors transforming their feelings into action by enabling each actor’s capacity to act independently. Social systems used to classify and even divide citizens – such as class, race and age – can limit an actor’s sense of agency, but since design interventions create platforms for engagement in a way that interrogates and also disrupts the status quo, they generally provide a safe and comfortable space for actors to heed the call to action. For example, one actor reiterates the use of an intervention platform as an enabler for action:

Richard: ... create a platform where citizens could actually participate and be almost architects ... of their neighbourhoods ...

However, the focus on individual agency should not overshadow collective, creative efforts owing to the format of interventions – they come into being through a network of actors and are characterised by collective engagement in the social world. Hence, collective agency is made visible through acts that use creative tactics and tools during a design intervention. For example, the act of drawing a response or alternate solution to a problem can be regarded as a creative act. Hence, it is

about using these tools individually, but to work with other actors and not on behalf of them. As the following actor suggests, the creative actions move beyond a level of volunteerism and are driven by a sense of belonging despite the uncertainty of the results of their actions:

Mike: ... trying to decide what works best for, but it's working with and saying how can we improve this together ...

Therefore, this overarching category theoretically advances the process of design citizenship as a self-organising and affective civic practice, and not just an effective political practice, which has the potential to interrogate the present and anticipate the future:

Rike: So, a lot of the, the research that I've been involved in ... has been ... exploring how you use creative tactics or creative strategies ... as a way to find other, other inroads into kind of more politicised things ... it's on, on the one hand it's a way of enacting... politics and it's another way of recasting politics ... in a different, in a kind of more affective realm ... So, for example, if we look at, if you look at the kind of participatory, you know South Africa's held up as this they'd have the most progressive ... constitution and also participatory democracy and all of that. Yet there's a lot of that that seems to be faltering and ... you know there are a lot of youth who are, feel alienated from political; whether they're social movements or other, unless it's around a particular ... very pressing issue ... so politics is always spoken about in this incredibly rational sense. That this is, you know, that this is political engagement. Whereas if you look at, and this is the most obvious example in some ways, is if you look at how hip hop functions ... it functions as an affective practice, right, it's not just in hip hop, I mean the broader sense of hip hop, including graffiti and ... Instead thinking of politics as being something that can be also ... not only demonstrated or engaged or represented but, but can be done in a particular, in an effective way, but also be rethought as something that is more affective.

4.3.2.1 Taking risks

'Taking risks' is akin to experimenting whereby an actor is led further away from deductive and analytic ways of thinking towards abductive or intuitive ways of thinking. In terms of design, this shift can be explained as a "creative leap", namely "the throwing of a bridge across the chasm between problem and solution" (Cross 2006:57). Similarly, taking risks during the process of design citizenship is about making moves, and more specifically, taking a leap towards the unknown, as stated by the following actor:

Dave: You have to be able to take that risk... And, say let's try this thing out. Let's, you know, see how the community responds ... And I, I'd say, personally for

one of the, one of the key factors here, and it keeps cropping up is, is not being risk-averse when it comes to ... you know, design interventions.

The act of taking risks is informed by a newfound awareness about a social issue and an actor's considered viewpoint on the subject. An actor's related moves are ultimately proactive ones, which take the form of creative proposals in response to the imminent challenging circumstances:

Danielle: it's all about putting things into action and being able to test ideas in the real-world with real people.

The problem-solving processes, which result in creative ideas and ultimately proposals for change, are driven by the use of design thinking. As such, the process includes testing ideas in real time and the process of taking risks therefore becomes iterative, cyclical and holistic, as highlighted in the following excerpts:

Richard: Design thinking on its own for me doesn't ... come up with the solution to the social issues... that we have. It's ... one of the tools in the toolbox, which is needed in order to do things that haven't been done before ... it sort of supports the ... sort of that gut feel abductive logic of this is what I think it could be, I've got no real evidence but let's ... let's experiment, let's create a risk-controlled environment, because this organisation is all about controlling and managing risk, let's create a box that we can experiment in and use design thinking as a process to get from A to B. But what we are now doing is we are graduating towards a solution and it's a journey ... And they [citizens] feel comfortable with this because it's, within here it's, iterative and it's not linear and it's all over the place ...

Bulelwa: And this is very helpful in understanding how some of our projects get started. But it is a circular way of working where we start things and we refine and we research and we test and then we continuously implement.

Mike: The notion of testing, failing, re-testing, failing quickly where possible, doing things in a light, quick and cheap way in order to experiment, see what works, and what works from multiple perspectives, from the users of the space to people, you know, who have more sort of permanent stakes there ...

Furthermore, the iterative process allows the actors involved to explore feasible and appropriate solutions. Hence, the iterative process, coupled with the explicit use of design methods, also begins to move the understanding of design beyond appearances where it's *"not just for aesthetic appeal"* (George). These sentiments were shared by the actors interviewed. For example:

Marcela: ... to kind of build on that street culture that already exists, and that wealth and, you know that very South African kind of ... what's the word I'm looking for? Spirit, it sounds a little esoteric, but I think that that's where it's at. You know it's not necessarily building more bike, bicycle lanes.

It follows then that the iterative process allows concerned citizens to define what they want, not only to one another but also to other actors, including authorities and institutions, who may have the skills and/or resources to initiate the proposed change. However, while simultaneously taking and managing creative risks during the problem-solving activities as part of an intervention, all actors need to also manage legal and/or ethical matters as part of their broader context. Normally, consent is not needed from the actors before being allowed to participate in an intervention because their actions are out of free will. However, since taking risks is about taking decisions to act, actors often find themselves in a “battle space” (Bruce) where they need to negotiate with themselves, other actors, and the public space in which they are operating. This type of negotiation can be viewed as a critical re-articulation of a social issue, towards a more productive and socially just end:

Rike: So ... a lot of what we've done, it has been based around using this [city] walk as a heuristic device ... and then having projects that come around, or come out of and explore this particular thing... so exactly for example the one set of engagements we did, or do, was around ... having had a long relationship with eh, market traders ... when the City (council) wanted to tear down the market... there was a series of projects that ended up trying to explore other ways of articulating the struggle ... and this tension but through [creative], artistic means. So with through video art or performances or through a variety of different things ... film screenings, etcetera, etcetera] ... I mean that was a very explicit way of trying to, of trying to think of how, how art could ...how [it] could rearticulate a position of struggle.

Hence, this so-called battle space in which actors find themselves when taking risks has ethical, and even legal, considerations and implications. For example, most actors whom I interviewed – regardless of their particular role in an intervention – felt that the city's by-laws hindered interventions and its related engagement. The following actor articulated the notion of a battle space as a one-sided argument:

Tshepang: ... and every year we'd have this whole struggle around the theme, where they want to stick to protocol and follow what ... the mayoral office gives them. So they need to follow protocol and they need to follow this and that ... the agenda that the mayor has set for them, that's what they need to follow, and we are about the social aspect. So there'd always be this argument between us, between the two partners, that, we don't care about

the mayor who wants you to focus on twenty-seven years of freedom or and, we just want to talk about the theme. Yes, we've had twenty-seven years of freedom, but what has that brought? And what comes with this twenty-seven years? People are still poor. People are still living in poverty. People. So in the end it would be in an argument that no, we're finding new guys and then now ... you want to bite the hand that feeds you because when you expose what we're still working on you know, it would be that tension. And so, that's just from the beginning and then during these events, obviously, we'd be the rebels and we'd still carry on with our theme, even though they want to focus on a more politically correct theme ... we would go and do our own thing and we'd have, even your students from the UP, from UP, do their own posters about the issues that are there: xenophobia and they'd do those posters and design banners and all of that, and apparently last year there were Metro Police who actually tore down those posters.

Fatima: Really?

Tshepang: Yes ... We are all entitled to freedom of speech, whether they are our partners or not. We are all entitled to that ... If the activism supports the theme that they've set, or their development, the developmental or democratic goals they've set, then it's good; it's fine with them. But if the theme questions some of their policies and practices, then it's a problem.

As a result of negotiating, some actors asserted that they had to manage the risks carefully during the process in order to develop/test their creative proposals. As the following actor notes, he felt that it was necessary to keep a good relationship with law to ensure future use of a given space:

Mike: We're having to work quite tightly within the laws that exist. Because, also we know that if we push it too much, we may not get event permits in the future which would be detrimental.

Other actors, however, shared a riskier attitude. Their actions depended largely on the nature of the creative proposal. One actor, for example, acknowledged her approach as being more fluid and circumstantial:

Danielle: I oscillate between those two. Sometimes I believe in asking permission and sometimes I don't ... Yah, like sometimes it's actually easier not to ask permission to do something, and rather test it out and see if it gets shut down, then go through the whole long tedious process of getting bylaws, bylaws passed or ... But as a designer, like by bridging this gap as I mentioned before like, I like to look at the relationship between government, academia, business and citizens. Like I think that they're all very much linked.

Another actor, a driven designer, reiterates the role of driven designers to experiment; this recalls the role of driven designers as athletes who can run with an idea, despite the lack of additional support. In the following excerpt, the actor's viewpoints suggest that taking risks has the power to

disrupt the status quo in a public space; in this regard the status quo maintains segregation and controls movement in the city in a way that may restrict democracy. Moreover, the actor notes that designers can negotiate their way around the red tape in the city; they do so in innovative ways to produce meaningful expressions of design activism:

Kirsten: So, from a design point of view, I think designers are very ... it's part of their DNA to sort of think outside of the box and kind of disrupt, like what are the rules? And so for me like, I like to see designers engaging and creating different activist opportunities ... that allow people to be engaged even though there is all this red tape. I mean the City [of Cape Town] doesn't want people to congregate and speak their mind. It's just, they'll never admit it, but if you look at event bylaws: if you have more than fifty, not even, there's events and then there's ... like marches, you know ... like when you want to have a march or a protest ... Like which bylaw is more, is more difficult to overcome if I wanted to have a whole bunch of people have the opportunity to activate the city in some way? Of course they are both equally difficult and, so any, anything over fifty and I need a permit. So, so my right, my constitutional right to associate with whom I like, is fine up until 49 people and then, and then I can't. So of course when we get together in groups and we ride bikes and we do crazy things, we do that in groups of 49. We just break them up into groups of 49 so if we have 500 people or 600 people, or whatever, 2000, we just break them up into groups of 49 and I don't need an event permit. But the thing is that the City [of Cape Town] doesn't want us to actually congregate and so I think from a design activism point of view, design is a great way to get around all of those bylaws and that, and that red tape. And design our way out.

Hence, the idea of designing a way out speaks clearly to the following actor's call for taking risks and not diffusing tensions, but instead creating them:

Rike: How do you nurture a kind of citizenship ... and these sort of processes and practices that don't end up becoming kind of complicit with the status quo ...

Overall, the process of taking risks has the potential to strengthen the connections and alliances between the actors involved, which were created during the awakening awareness process. When the consequences of taking risks results in positive results, the actors can potentially become empowered. Firstly, the act of taking risks gives actors confidence in their creative abilities:

Tjaart: All these design activism projects, it created a, a major view-change of what they [citizens] are capable of ...

Secondly, being empowered extends to the theoretical concept of becoming aware of one's identity and asserting it as a citizen:

Kenan: ... inside of the circle, the contra-circle, but also people who extend outside of the contra-circle, who, who enjoy accepting the idea of the angry black, to illustrate to them that this is not the only stance ... that exists ... that I am able to and will continue to be able to celebrate myself and be happy, be a happy black body, be a dancing black body, be a smiling black body, be a black body with a name, with a mother – not just a nameless, angry black body.

The process of taking risks therefore gives citizens an opportunity to reflect; it provides them with an opportunity to define themselves by way of their actions and other contributions during an intervention. While it is recognised that identities are not fixed, especially in the context of a very young democracy such as South Africa, the data generated for this study indicate that this potential for reflection through creative actions helps people to grapple with their history and identity. The acts of recognising and asserting one's identity allows actors to start approaching it as a strength rather than a weakness, especially during their continued pursuit of change by testing the range of creative proposals that emerge. These proposals towards 'what might be' leads to the creation of unforeseen opportunities for the actors. Taking risks therefore not only allows project ideas to evolve and develop, but also continues to inform perceptions and create new insights:

Tjaart: It's ... basically a trial and error ... where they actually try harder the next time, in order to break down those barriers [that exist between citizens].

4.3.2.2 Presenting an alternate narrative

During the process of awakening awareness the existing narrative regarding the theme of an intervention is disrupted by being questioned – as a form of deliberation – but it is only during this second, overarching process of “igniting agency,” when an alternate narrative is put forward and/or acted on by the key actors participating in an intervention. The actors interviewed revealed that the creative provocations and probes, which were used to encourage engagement in a public space, were not grounded in developed-world aspirations. The creative probes and the resulting narratives during the Pretoria and Cape Town interventions were informed by the South African context of the interventions – both in terms of space and the public around the intervention. Western aspirations of space tend to be privileged in developing world countries that boast and promote developed world facilities and attractions, often driven by technological advances. Despite this viewpoint

permeating current literature on the concept of participatory design for smart cities,²⁷ it can be a foreign and disconcerting approach to ignite agency amongst South African citizens. For example, citizens are sometimes skeptical to participate because they think that interventions will not serve them owing to a lack of an African focus. In keeping with this, the South African actors I interviewed shared the sentiment that their intention was to steer clear from international aspirations (typically Eurocentric or American) – a mindset that was embedded by the hierarchical and unjust regime of apartheid – which still plagues the psyche of many South Africans. Actors were very explicit about the need for contextual appropriateness:

Kirsten: I really wanted to interrogate where they are coming from [the American author of Tactical Urbanism], where the theory is birthed from, what their world view is around tactical urbanism, and it is what I suspected, which is very much grounded in their first world kind of ... idea of how a city should be, which is, you know liveable places ... kind of like artisanal cappuccinos and walk there instead of driving, and, and, and all lovely things that I think are rooted in a very different context to ours. So ... I think it works for some places but I think from a theory point of view, you know tactical urbanism in South Africa in Cape Town like right now is a very different thing. It's, it's much more a, a social justice related spatial rights issues ... And that annoys me that ... we aren't a bit more clear about how important it is to contextually appropriate things differently when it comes to stuff like that.

Tshepang: So basically I dealt with most of the events that took place ... and most of the events that I was dealing with were focusing on social justice, as well as creative interventions within communities.

Similarly, another actor spoke about the need to grapple with South Africa's past and current narratives regarding public space in a more direct, African manner, which allowed for more inclusive participation across nationalities and was not restricted to South African citizens:

Didi: I've got so many feelings about it but the first thing is that it helps me see what's possible for South Africa in terms of public spaces, how we use them and us connecting over that. It helps me see how fractured we are even further because there are some people who feel even more invited than others ... it sometimes makes me feel as though we sometimes have a European aspiration for the way we see civic engagement ... but at the same time we did have a lot of like African-ness, whatever that means, filtering through onto City Walk Saturdays.

²⁷ "Different definitions of 'smart cities' exist, although two perspectives prevail. One focuses on the production of services, technology and tools to optimise urban life. The other envisions alternative futures for urban development and the knowledge economy, cooperating with or organised by citizens" (Huybrechts 2016).

Fatima: It is interesting that you say that because what stood out for me, and again, I am not sure if it was people just in the city, or whether they were directly involved with this but I saw a lot of traditional dress. I saw ... a lot of use of, a sense of a local identity, which I think is evident in the city but I think it seemed, it really stood out for me when I looked at the groups of people who were in the spaces that the City Walk or the route that the City Walk took. So that was something that was quite curious for me. How there was this African aesthetic of sorts.

Didi: Yeah. I mean I think it is because there was a deliberate push from our side to make that very prominent and visible. But then when I dropped that away, when I took away the people that I knew were there because they had been invited to be there, I noticed that there were quite a lot of people from different parts of Africa and South Africa who were either participating or kind of observing what was going on ...

To this end, the facilitators of the interventions in Pretoria and Cape Town wanted to challenge the dominant ideologies that have permeated South Africa's urban planning and are still apparent in a city's use and regulation of public spaces, rather creating alternate narratives that have the potential to instil a sense of pride for all things national and African. For example:

Tshepang: No ... we've never had that Eurocentric argument. No, no it's very local, we tried to keep it local, even with the performances, we tried to keep it as local as possible, having, promoting local, not even just like local as in South African, as in Pretoria, artists as well as ... the areas and spaces we share must have the, the theme running throughout the day.

Another actor also contemplated how storytelling with a strong focus on local food could be leveraged for igniting agency in South African cities:

Mike: Yeah, the things that bring us together, the sharing of food, preparation of food. And I think that ... stories are told around food. And it's something that we've been discussing in terms of experimenting around narratives of the space, because of course, along City Walk there's very rich, historical narratives, some of which resonate negatively, others, you know, there are different layers of those. And we were thinking well how do we surface some of these stories in a non-threatening way from a different perspective where the stories are almost told by the citizens of Cape Town. And we're looking at food being that common thread where sort of, the storytelling, even though you know info boards, etc., where you're pointing out historical information is, the lens is through food and the significance of that area ...

Furthermore, since both food and storytelling are cultural actions, the act of presenting new narratives is inextricably linked to the process of igniting agency. Moreover, the storytelling tradition is acknowledged as an inherent part of the design process, which also facilitates the creation of alternate narratives:

Bruce: Storytelling mode is the key component of working with citizens and working with designers around the table. And then really, kind of, exploring the possible ideas that emerge out of that conducive space is obviously the next step. So, I mean it's very similar to the design thinking kind of modes ...

Through the process of creating an alternative narrative, the interventions saw community-based, local knowledge beginning to emerge through the creation of “counter-narratives”, as Fuad-Luke (2009) refers to them. South Africa has a rich tradition of oral storytelling, which can support the process of creating alternate narratives; in turn, such storytelling has the capacity to become a practical approach to uncovering and creating indigenous knowledge systems. Moreover, these alternate narratives also play a central role in the process of design citizenship because they facilitate new lived experiences for the actors involved; the experiences range from being a producer of new narratives to consuming the narratives. These roles are easily interchangeable during an intervention, which aids in nurturing storytelling skills (verbally and/or visually) as well as empowering the storyteller. The multiplicity of roles that an actor can play during an intervention also suggests that the creation of an alternate narrative provides citizens with wider access to different cultures. To this end, putting forward an alternate narrative suggests a ‘hacking’ philosophy for purposes of change.

Different narrative tactics, such as the written word and unusual juxtapositions of people in public spaces, were identified from the design interventions explored as part of this study. For example, reading African literature out loud in public spaces was a tactic to not only share stories, but also to create new ones. This tactic was fundamental to the nature of the 100 African Reads intervention, as part of the Partnership’s City Walk Saturdays:

Mike: There were a 100 or so, close to a 100 performers who were reading African literature from around the continent. And some allowed, some just sitting on a park bench reading, they were all dressed up, etcetera. Or a lot of them carrying umbrellas.

Fatima: I noticed quite a few of them.

Mike: So they were very distinctive and they made people pause and question, like what are you doing, etcetera ... and just, it was kind of, we didn't publicise what the hundred African reads were but we were hoping it opened

opportunity for narrative. And just very relevant that you had people sitting in the city reading African novels. It's such a mixed bag in terms of who lives in Cape Town and with all the xeno[phobia], the debate around that narrative that's surfacing, even the xenophobic issues that we're dealing with. It just seemed super relevant. How is this city responding to, not only the issues of local citizenry but the massive immigrant population that lives within the city. And indeed the country ...

As explained in the excerpt below, the literature created a disruptive experience in the inner city through a celebration of different literary and, by extension, cultural identities. Moreover, it inspired the creation of a collective, cultural experience which in turn allowed the recording of a new narrative:

Ukhona: How do I feel about it [the intervention]? I could feel a lot of things. Part of the way that the people are styled, you can see that a, dealing with African literature in Cape Town is quite a statement. So the way that the style is that they both serve as engaging with the content and also engaging with an image that you don't see. A sense of identity and an image you don't get to see in the city centre being celebrated and in its magnitude and all its beauty so the fact that somebody is taking an archive of the sense of beauty and the sense of kind of presence ... And it's being recorded somewhere, in the landscape of the city, for me, is also part of the conversation ... So, it's a dialogue starter, it's a kind of messing with the roles that people have.

Fatima: So it's almost like disrupting what you normally see, right?

Ukhona: It's disrupting what you normally see and you see that we've placed them quite, most of them next to the statues, and they become the centre for the duration of this thing. The people, the person who was there to otherwise marvel at some statue, that is quite controversial and its presence here for me then now that particular group that I've got there is now engaging with a living thing, next to the statue... And I like that dynamic and they are recording that picture, that moment ... so it lives somewhere.

Fatima: And ... it's not just the statue but it's the people that they're experiencing.

Ukhona: Exactly. So, yeah, and I could go the route of voyeurism, whatever, whatever, but the intention and the sense of beauty is also kind of to insert the African aesthetic ... into the city.

As can be seen in the excerpt above, the act of juxtaposing the old with the new was another tactic used to create new narratives in public spaces during an intervention. This tactic was a way of seeing

old things in new ways and was prevalent in a couple of the Cool Capital interventions.²⁸ One of these took place in Pretoria's Church Square. This square has historically become synonymous with a statue of Paul Kruger, a prominent Boer figure, and later president, known for his fight against the British in favour of establishing South Africa as an Afrikaner republic. The statue shows Kruger in a suit with a top hat, standing tall, and surrounded by a number of soldiers. However, the intervention turned the city's dominant apartheid narrative on its head by wrapping the statue in foil, from top to bottom. As such, the intervention used an apartheid monument as the point of departure to literally get citizens to reflect while creating a new narrative in the city centre. This viewpoint of using national monuments to subvert the apartheid narrative by facilitating aesthetic experiences that create new narratives,²⁹ was echoed by other actors, namely a confident corporate and a driven designer respectively:

Lize: We don't see it as our job to market the city but we want to promote the city. It is the capital city. And to show people that it doesn't have to be all these old Apartheid-era type statues that you do see in town. And it's, there are lovely buildings with amazing architecture. There are spaces that people can come and enjoy, like Burger's Park; you know we always walk through there. We show people that space and, and then share history around it ...

Kenan: Yah ... so the concept kind of arrived, we, we realised there was this massive statue in the middle of the, of the square that no one's ever used and utilised before. So we decided to do something again along the lines of the fact that, yes obviously in the time that we made it there was a lot of statues you know like being defaced – Rhodes has been taken down ... and we again wanted to explore a narrative that wasn't angry, you know ... as much as we felt like the angry narrative was valid and really, really needed to be here ... as much as we felt like, like the angry narrative needed to be explored again like we do feel like the celebratory narrative needs to be, it needs to be juxtaposed so that people looking in ... looking from the outside in can see that it's a spectrum of emotion. So we came up with this idea again of 'A black woman raised me' and we draped the statue about with an eight by five metre cloth, a white cloth, and it was actually interesting enough sewn by hand by my black mother.

Owing to the range of different ways in which alternate narratives may be told, the public space, and by extension the platform for engagement, serves as a kind of theatre, which is reminiscent of Augusto Boal's (1979) "theatre of the oppressed", a community-based tool for educational

²⁸ I was closely involved with the Cool Capital initiative in a personal capacity so I was exposed to the interventions myself as a citizen.

²⁹ Using national monuments and structures in the built environment is a common practice in public art. For example, Christoff Wodiczko (1999) makes extensive use of projections on public structures to address issues of public concern. Themes such as history, memory and archiving, in particular, are prevalent in his work.

purposes. As a result, these narratives serve as additional catalysts for action (to ideate and imagine) because stories, by their very nature, allow actors to suspend their disbelief. In addition, the notion of a narrative within the context of a design intervention is not restricted to fiction; it uses the actors' imaginations to articulate both visual and verbal statements towards change:

Rike: Let's reimagine the city, let's, you know, let's redesign it, if we rebuilt it, what would we do ...

In the same way that Judith Butler (1988) sees gender as a repetition of performative acts, presenting an alternate narrative supports the theoretical notion that design citizenship is constructed through a repetition of actions, such as imagining and articulating these new visions:

Kenan: It's a lot to deal with as like one singular human being but I do feel like the solution that – I can't say it's a solution necessarily but like all of these conflicting kind of identities – I've found that like instead of finding, 'cause having a hierarchy is very destructive and oppressive and I've found that like the way that's made me feel better about my different upbringing is that it's more of a dance than it is a list ... and sometimes we might waltz and sometimes we might jazz and sometimes we might just move our bodies to afro-beat and that's fine ...

Hence, it can be inferred that actions related to design citizenship are not an imitation of normative actions, but their primary focus is on subverting the norm through the creation and application of new narratives. However, if any of the actors are pushing an undisclosed agenda, be it individual or institutional, then this stage of the process is at risk of feeding historical narratives and even perpetuating stereotypes. One actor raised this concern as follows:

Rike: ... how they also mask the real design challenges that need to ... happen, and how those become a form of erasure of history ...

Another possible shortcoming that was highlighted by the same actor was that despite creative tools being used to create alternate narratives, "to reimagine a neighbourhood" (Rike) for example, "it's really difficult to kind of, know at what level a participatory design process can actually change things" (Rike). In particular, the actor questions the throughput from the government officials in terms of taking the alternate narratives forward and seeing them materialise: "use design as an, you know, urban design as an imaginative process but the problem is ... that step ..." (Rike).

Her view, which resonates with numerous other actors' is that "... holding that design accountable to a city is the problem ... because the reality of urban design is that there's not much money, most municipalities are just trying to, you know, do service delivery, or make sure the robots are working,

or whatever in terms of the budget, the spatial design budgets, that ... there might be other budgets that are way more inflated” (Rike).

4.3.3 Sustaining a design thinking impetus

The third overarching process of design citizenship is where the real value lies for the phenomenon to have the most impact for the actors, especially with regard to social justice. Here the focus shifts from a short-term goal towards long-term goals for civic change; this is achieved by taking the alternate narratives, which arose during the process of igniting agency, forward so that they can be realised on the ground to achieve the intended goals of the respective design intervention. The process of sustaining a design thinking impetus can therefore be defined as the consequences, both intended and unintended, of awakening awareness and igniting agency. However, arriving at this process depends on two key dimensions, namely time and significant/sustained exposure to interventions:

Tshepang: I think it’s very important for us to have design mechanisms as well as ... that will help people to think in a different way and talk in different ways about social issues that are very important. But I think that not just, we shouldn’t make it a once-off thing ... like ok, we do it for three weeks and then we’re gone. And then you guys must figure it out on your own. And these people, this is, would have been a first time that they learn about these new ways of thinking and new ways of tackling or grappling with issues. So I think there should be continuous interaction with people, especially in disadvantaged areas on ways in which they can talk through their struggles, through design interventions or mechanisms, because right now we’re seeing it all over the country. We’re seeing a surge of people now burning things and; because they just can’t articulate their problems and needs and they feel like they aren’t heard ... So if we get more social justice ... interaction between these people and civil society, then I think there’d be a difference. It might not be that much but it’s gonna be huge.

Over time, sustaining a design thinking impetus also speaks to establishing and nurturing a civic culture that embraces the use of design thinking, or so-called creative thinking on a much wider scale in society:

Tshepang: I think it can ... social activism through design actually can break down barriers ... And it can bring inclusiveness where there’s no inclusiveness. With design activism there’s no need, we all; there’s cultures we need to consider, obviously, so we’re all different. There’s those people who don’t mind standing up, going to the Union Buildings and marching up and down till seven in the evening. And there’s those people who’d rather vocalise their concerns via blogs and social media, and, so you put the two together, what can you get? Because you don’t want, you don’t have those people who have time or even the resources to be on social media ... You also don’t get, you

don't have those people who can, who have the liberty or the time to go to the Union Buildings, so I think through design interventions and creating such spaces as the Feast, as well as spaces where we can all talk about the same issues that affect us, that's very important, especially through design, because sometimes there's also communication barriers, language barriers and through design; design just kind of like puts everything in perspective. Everything is one. We are all one and we can all talk through design and through the knowledge we gain as well as the creative thinking that we've gained from such interventions.

In this process, the actions of the actors are not restricted to using design tools for civic engagement, but move towards establishing an intrinsic design methodology for action towards social change. This methodology implies an innate use of design thinking – non-linear, intuitive ways of thinking and being – by the actors. Here, design thinking skills amongst the key city actors becomes a fixed asset, often employed for self-initiated projects.

As such, adopting a design thinking methodology for civic engagement facilitates a broader worldview for actors and redefines design, both pragmatically and philosophically. Therefore, the big-picture thinking allows individual actors to place themselves more proactively in a wider social and political context. This personal contextualisation by the actors has the potential for them to consider their actions within a wider social and civic system; essentially, it is a process of self-regulation and personal interdependence, driven by an innate sense of empathy:

Khanyiswa: On my side, it did affect me because ... sometimes I didn't even see my kids because I'm always coming late, they're sleeping so I didn't have time for them ... that workshop ... teach me a lot, because if you come late, you have time early in the morning. You have to say, you have to hug your child, when they're going to school because if you don't have that, so that you can just have that relationship, you can bond with your children. It's not about you take them to go to the park, or to go to the shops it's about, that they can get inside their house ...

One actor, a government official who had participated in the Feast of the Clowns intervention, also speaks clearly to the increased sense of empathy when explaining how the experience of participating in the intervention benefitted him:

Fhelani: To be more sensitive about social issues. To be more understanding and patient with community members. Not to look down upon other people. We are all equal before the eyes of God.

Similar to the first two processes of design citizenship, the third process of sustaining a design thinking impetus also sees a blurring of roles amongst the key city actors. From a design point of view, this process of design citizenship disrupts the traditional designer–client relationship from being a dichotomous relationship between actors and enables a more reciprocal design authorship process:

Mike: So different layers that hopefully over time through demonstration and it certainly what we've experienced on our other projects such as Church Square, where it starts us very much encouraging people to come and do stuff but then over time it being citizen driven. So, people living around the square are the ones who are activating the space. And with a little bit of help, facilitation from ourselves.

However, despite juggling more than one role, one type of city actor does not replace another type when it comes to specialist skills needed as part of the solution. For example, there is still the dependence on the design expert to take any material ideas forward to address the situation at hand:

Masana: So you creatives should do it ... [it is] only the creative sector that can [take initiative and responsibility for materialising project proposals]

Similarly, the materialisation of ideas is not a given; it depends on support from government officials as well as corporate sponsors. Hence, not all the interventions necessarily result in the realisation of an alternate narrative, but nonetheless the predominant shift, which distinguishes this third process from the previous two processes of design citizenship, is that the majority of actors (especially the concerned citizens) move from merely being consumers of an intervention to realising and becoming co-producers of future iterations. To this end, the two overarching concepts that explain the process of sustaining a design thinking impetus include 'becoming a change agent' and 'educating oneself and others through new networks'.

4.3.3.1 Becoming a change agent

Sustained involvement with design interventions has the potential to nurture change agents amongst the city actors. Within the context of design citizenship, the prefix 'driven' is not restricted to designers, but other actors also begin to recognise that they have the capacity to affect change through their actions, first and foremost as citizens. Becoming a change agent in a community has many different facets in terms of coordinating and affecting change amongst new assemblages of actors, including *"guiding them [the citizens] ... changing the way people live their lives... [and] ...*

proving it [the status quo] wrong ... to disprove basically ... what normal conventions are and what they perceive spaces to be” (Tjaart).

The different facets of ‘becoming a change agent’ speak to the processes of community advocacy and mobilisation; essentially, they are all actions that work towards a common goal, for the common good. Here, the concept of paying it forward³⁰ translates as an action of playing it forward. Actors admit that playing is part of the processes of design citizenship, and realise the power of play as being more than just trivial game playing, especially when they start to assume leadership roles:

Zukiswa: I thought it was a child's play that was there. I didn't know that it was going to come back to us. You do have these things trying to change our Khayelitsha, how can we change our Khayelitsha to be ... I didn't know that it was going to follow us ... How can we change our Khayelitsha to be a better place? And each and every one was having a chance to, to put a flag and we can do whatever we want to do as long as you are going to be able to explain how to do it.

The following actor shares a similar sentiment about recognising the potential of play as a tool when in a facilitator’s role:

Tshepang: So I think it's very important for there to be play, especially when teaching kids, or people who are very – not even kids, adults also, who have very ... who don't like talking, who don't like being open and honest; teaching them through creative ways, or talking to them through creative ways.

During this process of design citizenship, actors start to take initiative and they move from being mere participants towards assuming leadership roles when they realise a specific need in the community. At this stage, there is a self-regulatory dynamic that underpins actors’ actions, which is non-prescriptive in nature. This realisation was significant, especially coming from a governmental official, because they can often be obstinate (as observed in their persona) during the initial process of design citizenship:

Fhelani: Adaptability is very important. We learned not to impose programmes to the community ... Allow the community to express themselves both in an artistic manner or ideologically. Community members want to see themselves as builders and creators of the city.

Hence, taking initiative and allowing inclusivity inadvertently help to nurture community design leaders amongst the city actors, who can thereby encourage experimental design methods to

³⁰ The notion of paying it forward is in contrast to a recipient paying someone back for a good deed done to them. Instead, it entails doing good deeds for other people so as to maintain a cycle of giving and goodwill in order to make a more widespread difference.

address issues of social change. For example, a concerned citizen who participated in a Design Storm initiative (on early childhood development) in Cape Town, felt more equipped at a later date to tackle challenges head-on in her community:

Zukiswa: So I learnt that there are many things to learn that how a child behaves or to do things ... it was so helpful to me. Just because we are advocates, we are, we are like the organisers, we do the work every day. We saw these things and sometimes you saw and you don't know what is happening in the child so like, when we're there, I think there is something that we didn't know, like happens in front of us that we didn't resolve. But if we know that, at the time, we'll resolve it at the time it's happening.

The abovementioned narration supports the viewpoint that an ethic of care and empathy becomes prevalent amongst the actors not only at home, but also in public spaces, as noted in the excerpt below. Hence, the potential to elicit strong emotional responses through the power of ideas – essentially, a combination of aesthetics and an ethics of care – motivates actors to take other ideas forward:

Kenan: The one dialogue that was quite emotional for me for the 'I died in Nigeria' piece that we did ... we videotaped it and then we did like a video, a little bit of a case study at Church Square, and when we did that I wanted to be very separate from the piece because my face was on the piece, I didn't want people to be like 'hey, that's you' because the artwork itself wasn't about me as a person, it was about the message.

Kenan: So I, I separated my-, I went to some other stuff in Church Square, look at some other galleries, but when I got back one of my friends, Tanya ... who is quite good at speaking to people ... said that two women came up to her and said that when they saw the piece at Open Streets ... when they left, they cried like they've never cried before. And that blew my mind, because that was the very first time in my life that I've heard of people having a physical response to one idea that I've had ... and that I've contributed to with the team ... that was very, that was very emotional for me knowing that someone walked away with a physical response to the work. It was beyond words, she just told Tanya, we, we burst into tears – thank you ... it was a very, it was a very emotional response and it was the first time that I realised that anything that I can think of ... can actually have some power and impact and it kind of really bolstered me to like want to do, or propelled me rather to do more work.

Similarly, the following concerned citizen recognised her power to speak up and sustain continued involvement in decision-making processes at a provincial level, instead of being a recipient of political decisions taken from the top down:

Zukiswa: Even now, we are busy with, we are busy with e-budget. So, if we do not the ideas and we do not open our mouth, they can do something they think is

right for us. Whereas we are thinking, we have different ideas of doing things in our basic services that we need. If we just sit down and watch them, they will do something that they are thinking we will need. As if we don't know what we want, you see.

Another key realisation with regard to leadership is appreciating that material objects do not necessarily need to be designed to address a social situation, but that there is an increased need of designing systems and strategies. This process of design citizenship sees actors working together to create a spirit and culture of creativity and conviviality as opposed to merely contemplating the addition of material infrastructure in the city as a means of problem-solving. As one actor highlights, instances of design activism should be “*an amplification of what's already there [in the space] ...*” (Mike). This viewpoint suggests that the creative responses to the problems being addressed are not necessarily hindered by the need for considerable material resources.

This type of civic leadership, through the implementation of strategies, has the potential to manage expectations better amongst the actors involved because it assists with setting the preconditions for citizens to take decisions by providing more appropriate cues. This in turn can help to facilitate behaviour change:

Kirsten: I mean a lot of the work ... that I do I find I'm designing less stuff and I'm designing more strategies.

Kirsten: So, so, you know, what do we build first and when? How can we leave space to tweak what we've done, and then rethink it? So, I kind of think like designing objects whether ... homes and or if they are you know small things like, small like practical things that will change lives. I think design thinking in terms of strategy I think needs to, it needs to be more of that ... you know as opposed to actual design solutions. That said, I think that in the case of informal settlements, for example, I struggle, I find, I find the design community, like me included, like we need to be held to account. Because what designers do, and I've seen so many of these projects I can actually be physically ill, around ... you know we could do that better, we, we could design our way out of this big problem' but, the fact of the matter is, is that if I had a buck for every time I saw a, a 'let's, let's rethink the informal s-, settlement, let's rethink the shack' like, I'd be very rich if I had a buck for every time I saw a project like that go out. Because a lot of these really inventive ideas don't go anywhere because there isn't an implementation strategy attached.

The value of change agents working towards putting more formal systems in place to facilitate further collaboration became evident through the actors' actions and experiences. Within the context of design citizenship, a formal system speaks to the creation of policies to support the

processes of design citizenship. The following government official spoke extensively about the role of a policy to support actors' ongoing involvement and commitment to design activism. Although this changing viewpoint about the need for collective action was recognised very early on in the design citizenship process by the driven designers, it is significant that the government officials also began to realise that there is power in numbers, as opposed to just operating independently:

Masana: I think Cape Town has been very proactive when it comes to design matters and they even have a Design strategy that government there, the Department of Economic Development. They have a very good Design strategy that they did in collaboration with a whole lot of organisations that deal with design ... That's why we're working with a wide range of people ... from government, national government, provincial, municipalities, and also practitioners... So we get buy-in as widely as possible. ... Because everyone wants a design policy. With a design policy you can do so much because ... it's easier for government to even support the [design] sector more once you've got a policy ... because when it's one designer doing that, it's very hard for government to, to assist ... But if it's a collective and they say they want to do something because, that's part of activism, you now.

Ultimately, actors experienced changes first-hand in their community owing to sustained involvement as well as commitment post-intervention; they attributed the success to their own efforts as a community leader or, in other words, a change agent:

Malwande: Yes, because of our work, we saw changes now ...

4.3.3.2 Educating oneself and others through new networks

Overall, the process of sustaining a design thinking impetus resembles a loop, where the outcomes of the actions by actors result in the creation of new networks or communities of practice. In turn, these communities of practice have the potential to promote new partnerships and collaborations. In particular, these networks cater for additional knowledge sharing and learning opportunities for oneself and others, as highlighted in the excerpts below:

Danielle: Like more and more and more and more and I feel like it's a life-long learning for, for me.

Zukiswa: There are people that are educating us. And we took that to our branches. We have branches all over here in Khayelitsha where we run education as a community advocate here at SJC [Social Justice Coalition]. So it's where they get information about many things like e-budget. We educate them first so that they can understand and then there at our branch, we try, we first educate the branch members and then we come out to the community

members to do public awareness. Each and everyone in the community. And then when we decide to, for example, now e-submissions. They all know about that ...

Zukiswa's viewpoint about the education process in the excerpt above comes from her own learning curve from participating in a Design Storm, one focused on early childhood development (ECD):

Zukiswa: It was very important to me. Like, for example when I attended, it was my first time to attend the ECD workshop, so it's like a workshop to me. Or education ...

Therefore, in the same way that being a change agent works towards creating more widespread behaviour change in citizens, educating oneself and others through new networks also moves away from commercially-driven DIY action towards more civic-inspired DIY behaviour, as noted by this concerned citizen:

Malwande: Now [post-intervention] there are people that are working full time there ...

Fatima: Full time ... in the government? Or in the community?

Malwande: In the community.

The focus on working together as citizens, and respecting one another through the learning process, is echoed by the following actor:

Tshepang: I think, you know, what helped us there was the facilitation from – I think we also had some of your students there facilitating and creating that atmosphere that it's ok, let's all be open and honest with each other, even if there's adults and kids, there's no need for those social barriers where, you know, an, an adult can have, can't have a good conversation, or a, a strong conversation about a topic when there's kids around. So it was very, in the beginning it was very ... how can I call it? It was very tough to break the ice between, within the room because there was adults and there was kids and obviously we have to take into account the cultural barriers that were there, like adult versus child, child versus adult. Kids are too scared to talk. Adults don't want to talk, they refrain from talking. So, I think with the help of the students coming in, as well as professionals, we were able to break that ice and then, over time, got to have a conversation where kids were able to open up and tell us how they felt and then adults also open, able to open up and tell us how they felt. So I think that broke the ice, the fact that there were facilitators who helped ... clarified to the people that, listen it's not about being respected or not respected. It's not about that. We are here to find a solution to a problem, and we're here to work towards finding a solution to a problem.

The DIY ethos that comes through in the actors' anecdotes reiterates the widening use of design as an open-source mode of thinking, specifically for education purposes:³¹

George: I do want to say that we have especially the advantage or the power to do such things with design. Because design we can use in a sense, almost as a, as a weapon, as a tool, as an aid to ... spearhead more like ... like educational elements or educational programmes ...

This aspiration towards educating the community as well as building capacity in the community and not just paying lip service to change was highlighted by the following actors in their reflections about their design intervention experiences:

Khanyiswa: I think creativity is, we can use that thing, of design storming in terms of, we can, the best we can get workshops amongst us so that we can go to teach the community and can make sure that they understand, before you can go to the community, you can just educate the structures amongst to the community so that they can be easily to go to the community if you can just first collect those structures. And then, you can educate them. So I think they can have, they can have that, they can motivate their communities.

Fhelani: Community takes ownership of the programme/s and control the outcome of the project at the same time that the City of Tshwane and Tshwane Leadership Foundation built the capacity of the respective community to make informed decisions and to implement projects as a collective. The community engagement improved and increased decision making at the community level.

The recognition of the need to educate more citizens involves orchestrating resources in a way that is relevant to the context where the change is desired:

Fhelani: A diverse team of knowledgeable and motivated people is assembled to deal with the identified issues. The identified people should have the passion to make a difference in the community. Disseminating the correct information to the affected individuals is critical as this promotes understanding of the conditions people and the team is working on and the causes and solutions.

Educating oneself and others also highlights the underpinning values such as accessibility and reciprocity when creating new networks:

Masana: It's more open to everyone. That, that's the beauty of it ... So, it's a win-win situation ...

³¹ A DIY ethos in design has previously been documented, specifically within a graphic design context. For example, the book *D.I.Y.: Design It Yourself (Design Handbooks)*, edited by Ellen Lupton (2006), is aimed at designers and non-designers alike. Compiled by students and faculty members from the Graphic Design MFA program at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore, USA, the book showcases a selection of projects to inspire and encourage readers to produce their own graphics. Despite the intention to instil graphic agency in its readers, the book is by and large still aligned with the traditional notion of design as a function.

The recognition of shared responsibilities in the new networks also leads to shared and sustained learning. Hence, this third phase of the design citizenship process concentrates on a citizenship educational approach that is more critical and radical for citizens than the first two processes of awakening awareness and igniting agency. For example, one actor spoke of this when she stated that design interventions provide an opportunity to educate people about their rights as citizens and for them to act accordingly:

Tshepang: Where we, we involved adults, we involved people of the community ... concerning the theme. So we'd have them, we'd have talks around that, have design policies, we'd have design workshops and talk about policies in a different way through design. I think that was very influential and that was very strong. It was a very strong way of sending the message out, showing them that ... freedom is not just ... what do you call it? It's not just one of those; that it's expected, it's supposed to be that way. Freedom is also a responsibility. So we were talking, we were talking around that, those issues, how they can keep their communities free and fair from drug-, alcohol abuse, physical abuse, child abuse, all of those things. And how they can keep themselves free from all of those things affecting them directly. So, it was very interesting to see the interaction with adults and parents ... I mean adults and children via these design workshops that we'd have. And then they would design and they'd have discussions around it, that was very powerful. And it, we kind of got to see that actually there's an underlying message for all of us, you know, whether you're fifty years old or whether you're five years old, that we all deserve to be free and all deserve to be protected ...

A significant outcome of the learning curve that one actor acknowledged provides evidence that the process of design citizenship has the potential to come full circle by closing the gap for actors between being passive participants and becoming proactive players. That entails the shift from participating in an intervention to subsequently being a change agent and creating new networks and learning opportunities. This acknowledgement makes visible the aforementioned theoretical concept of building capacity in a community by emancipating its members (to secure their economic and social rights), albeit limited owing to constraints such as time and/or resources:

Tshepang: TLF has been around for over twenty years and they've done a lot of workshops, especially with people from like outside the country, as well as outside the province who come and done creative workshops, design workshops with them [the local, Pretoria community]; there's only one guy who I heard of who with, back in the day he was a teenager ... and he was living around the CBD, I think he was also from a disadvantaged family, and he used to come to TLF over the holiday programme and there was a design

workshop, or some, something along those lines, in the early 2000s, and ... they were taught photography also there and then from that point, he, he kind of latched on to the, the creative aspect of photography, to the point where now he has his own photography company and he takes photos and we've used him to film during the Feast. So I think ... it's one in a few cases unfortunately, and I would have loved; it would be such a good idea to have it be more prevalent and more frequent, but I feel like, because of the lack of follow-up, then, somewhere along the line there's a shortfall with the topic as well as with the design interventions.

4.4 The phenomenon of design citizenship as experienced by the city actors

The fourth P presented here, namely the phenomenon, is the theoretical articulation of design citizenship, which has resulted from the critical analysis of the action concepts that were grounded in the data generated during this study. Essentially, the phenomenon detailed below serves as the umbrella under which the other three Ps fit: place, people and processes:

The phenomenon of design citizenship can be defined as a transformative aesthetic experience for citizens from political enagement to critical citizenship, through a process of drip-feeding design investments.

Following from the above theoretical statement, the phenomenon is situated at the intersection between design activism and citizenship and comprises two key experiences by citizens: drip-feeding design investments, and moving from enagement to critical engagement through aesthetic disruptions in a public space. Here, the word 'citizens' refers primarily to the four personas presented earlier in this chapter, namely driven designers, concerned citizens, confident corporates and government officials. However, the data analysis revealed that, by and large, the driven designers and the concerned citizens who are grappling with a social challenge are the primary city actors, with the other two types of actors mainly playing a supporting role.

The notion of drip-feeding design investments mimics the funnel-shaped visualisation of the processes of design-citizenship (Figure 7). More specifically, the notion of drip feeding suggests that the user journey is a gradual process from awakening one's awareness towards becoming a critical citizen. Hence, the funnel, that is the processes of design citizenship, can be considered a model of behaviour change that rests on the dimension of time:

Lize: You know every single time we, we do an event and we get new people and all of those things, it all adds, and it all adds that value and eventually you know ... it's like a wave you know eventually it will become more and more and more and more. So and I think like I said when I, when we started I think

for me the thing is that I could see the impact that the first biennial had and see the rewards now.

This process of drip feeding also denotes a trickling-down effect, as explained by the following actor:

Masana: Yah, there has been an increase ... to a certain level because people now started seeing the impact of design on, you know the trickle effect on the social level ... on the environmental level ... the technological level and they started realising the role that also we as the Department of Arts and Culture can play ...

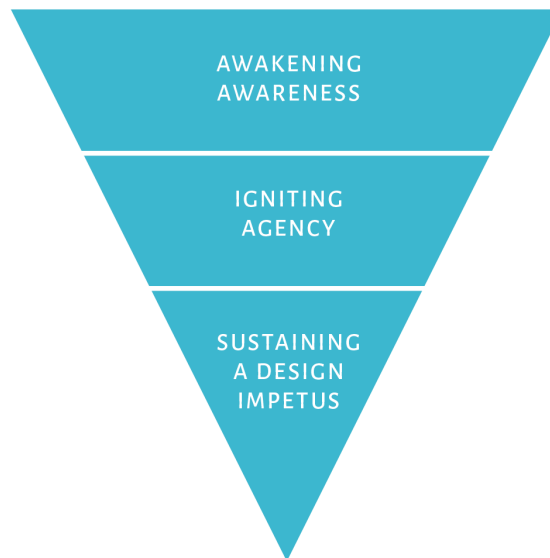


Figure 7: The three drip-feeding processes of design citizenship.

The drip-feeding process, which begins from awakening awareness to eventually sustaining a design thinking impetus deposits ‘design investments’ for the actors as the phenomenon begins to take shape. Akin to financial investments, design investments that emerged in the data are consistent instalments that accumulate over time – the more one puts in, the higher the chances of the price of the returns – but the instalments in this context denote the accumulation of critical and creative thinking skills through immersion in design interventions. Since the focus is on accumulating a wealth of design-related experiences, there is potential for the actors’ human capital and social capital to grow. However, what actors put in, in terms of their time and effort for instances of design activism, also determines how far down the design citizenship funnel they reach. As a result, there has to be some intrinsic and personal motivation for the actors to sustain their interest in design interventions. Essentially, each process sets the preconditions for the next process and ultimately

sets the tone for an ongoing loop of sustained critical citizenship. Citizens can fall out of the process without interest and/or motivation, so it should be noted that the phenomenon is not necessarily experienced by all actors to the same extent.

Nonetheless, the transformed, civic reality that each actor has the ability to arrive at if they have moved through the social processes of design citizenship is a repertoire of aesthetic experiences. To this end, if the phenomenon is realised in its entirety, it presents a gestalt outlook where the actors' experiences are grouped to form a holistic and unified civic outlook, where all actors see themselves inextricably as a part of a social and political system and not independent of it. Furthermore, the conceptual analysis of the data illustrates that the phenomenon is not grounded in political thought but more so in design thinking – that is, a playful or experimental reasoning of what might be. The previously mentioned concept of 'playing it forward' underpins the self-guided learning curve of the phenomenon, with non-directed play towards a directed social-justice-related problem. This 'playful' approach allows ongoing experimentation beyond the confines of a formal design intervention and also helps to manage the expectations of the assemblage of actors who are involved. Moreover, the self-guided learning experiences facilitate the nurturing of an actor's skills. In particular, it builds understanding and capacity towards behaviour change. This capacity also extends to building trust in one another as actors, in design and in institutions such as the government and other NGOs; therefore, design citizenship's aims and/or effects can be seen at an individual level and/or a collective level (where a shared humanity becomes apparent).

In a preferred real-world situation, the implications of the phenomenon of design citizenship is that citizens move from being politics-focused to being praxis-focused – they move from the realm of contemplation to a realm of meaningful action. This means that the actors move from a passive outlook based on their subjective narrative of the world to being proactive, with an increased sense of objectivity and a better understanding of one another. Overall, the phenomenon's trajectory, from enragement to critical citizenship, can be visualised as a value chain (Figure 8), with phases that are directly related to the basic social processes that constitute the phenomenon.



Figure 8: Design citizenship's value trajectory over time.

The first phase, enagement, is what serves as the motivation and point of departure for an actor to get involved in a design intervention. The first process of design citizenship, awakening awareness, then ensues where 'engagement' with other actors is encouraged to create awareness about the relevant social issue. Should an actor's involvement be sustained, they move on to the 'empowerment' phase of design citizenship, namely igniting agency. This phase is informed by the viewpoint that an actor's awareness needs to be concretised through action. The final phase, namely emancipation, may take a longer time for the actors to arrive at, if at all, but this represents an ideal form of design activism, which has the potential to emancipate actors by means of sustaining a design thinking impetus. Emancipating actors means that actors become equipped with the necessary civic and design skills to contribute to a more just and equal society through critical citizenship.

The shift from enagement, being largely inward-looking, towards emancipation, which has a proactive, unrestricted stance, echoes Gloria Ladson-Billings' (2007:19) view on patriotism: "[p]atriotism is not what you say; patriotism is what you do". In a similar vein, design citizenship as a phenomenon rests on the notion that is not what you say in protest but what you do pro-actively as a citizen when using a design thinking mode of reasoning. To this end, the phenomenon plays a role in redefining the nature of the social contract between the state and its citizens where there is a redistribution of power from empowerment to emancipation. The phenomenon also cultivates and nurtures a DIY-ethos that embraces the idea of doing one's "civic service" – an ethos that is hopeful and proactive, one that relies on integrity, strength and ability of all actors to make choices that contribute to the common good.

4.5 Summary

This chapter offered the analysis and findings from the rich data generated for this study with the four city actors who were involved in design interventions in Pretoria and Cape Town. Each type of city actor was represented by means of a persona to sketch their role and outlook on design activism, namely driven designers, concerned citizens, confident corporates and (obstinate) government officials. Overall, the theoretical conceptualisation was narrated using what I termed the 'Four Ps framework of design citizenship', consisting of the people and places of design citizenship, the social processes of design citizenship and the phenomenon of design citizenship. A theoretical articulation of the phenomenon concluded this chapter and serves as the springboard for Chapter Five, which expands on these conceptual findings in the form of a substantive theory of design citizenship.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF THE SUBSTANTIVE THEORY OF DESIGN CITIZENSHIP

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this grounded theory study was to arrive at a substantive theory of design citizenship. This theory was presented in Chapter Four “as an explanatory scheme comprising a set of concepts related to one another through logical patterns of connectivity” (Birks & Mills 2015:108). The explanatory scheme I used is titled the ‘Four Ps framework of design citizenship’. The four Ps articulated the actions and experiences of design interventions by the research participants, categorised as four distinct city actors. Chapter Four also unpacked the rich data with regard to the processes of the social phenomenon as carried out by the city actors.

Following from the theoretical framework, Chapter Five weaves key ideas from extant discourse with the findings and research interpretations of this study. This is done to bring the grounded theory of design citizenship in conversation with existing theories. In turn, since the intention is to advance the discourse on the topic, the main categories identified and explicated in the previous chapter guide the critical discussion in this chapter. The discussions about the people, places and processes of design citizenship inform the model of design citizenship; the Y-shaped model presented below is a form of “illustrative modelling” (Birks & Mills 2015:135) and is used in this study as a strategy for presentation.

To this end, the following questions posed at the beginning of the study are considered and interwoven in the discussion in this chapter to construct a critical theorisation of design citizenship:

- Who is the design citizen?
- What are the tools and practices of design citizenship?
- Where and what are the spaces and communities of design citizenship?
- Is design citizenship emancipatory?

5.2 People and places of design citizenship

As understood through the conceptualisation of my data, the creation of a platform for engagement is what drives the phenomenon of design citizenship. The platform of engagement utilises local physical assets and spaces to build a specific public for the intervention through interaction (by design as well as play). For the purpose of design citizenship, there is not one type of public that has been shown to emerge; each public is unique and is configured and united by the common cause

being addressed. This is consistent with the definition of a public, as discussed by Huybrechts (2016); she aligns her argument with John Dewey's philosophy on what constitutes the term 'public'. According to Dewey (1954), the public comprises citizens, namely residents who have voting rights. Moreover, he argues that the public only comes into being once citizens are negatively affected by the consequences of the state; the negative results of the state's actions/policies are what affect and drive the collective behaviour of citizens to challenge certain issues. Similarly, design interventions serve as a catalyst for the creation of the public for the phenomenon of design citizenship to occur. The design citizens, who constitute these publics, are presented in my research as the four key, city actors who come together to address significant social issues by or through design. This resonates with Fuad-Luke's (2009:786) definition of design activism as applying "design thinking, imagination and practice... [either] knowingly or unknowingly".

While all four city actors are essential to make up design citizenship's public, the two personas who play leading roles and make up the bulk of the phenomenon's public are the driven designers and the concerned citizens. More specifically, the research findings have revealed a proliferation of new roles for designers in this context. The five roles that emerged from the grounded theory – curators, harvesters, facilitators, athletes and translators – challenge the designer's traditional role as a service provider. This has implications for the way that traditional designer–client relationships, as advanced by Nelson and Stolterman (2012), are viewed within the context of design activism in general, and design citizenship in particular (Cassim & M'Rithaa 2015).

Nelson and Stolterman (2012) present five generalised designer–client power relationships as seen in Figure 9: designer artist, designer facilitator, designer technician, designer expert and an ideal service relationship. Each of these relationships are defined by the designer's role as a distinct entity, and depends on the client's needs as the recipient of this service. For example, the first four relationships are unbalanced because there is a hierarchy between each entity. However, the fifth relationship, the service relationship, is regarded as a "dynamically balanced type" (Nelson & Stolterman 2012:47) and is visualised using the Chinese yin-yang symbol. Despite this visual analogy connoting a participatory ethos and a complementary relationship between the designer and the client, I have argued previously that both entities "remain opposite and in flux in this articulation" (Cassim & M'Rithaa 2015). Furthermore, "participatory design engages a predefined group of users and facilitates the empowerment of resources" (Cassim & M'Rithaa 2015) in a way that still "directs the focus of the design process towards the outcomes of the collaboration, namely objects".

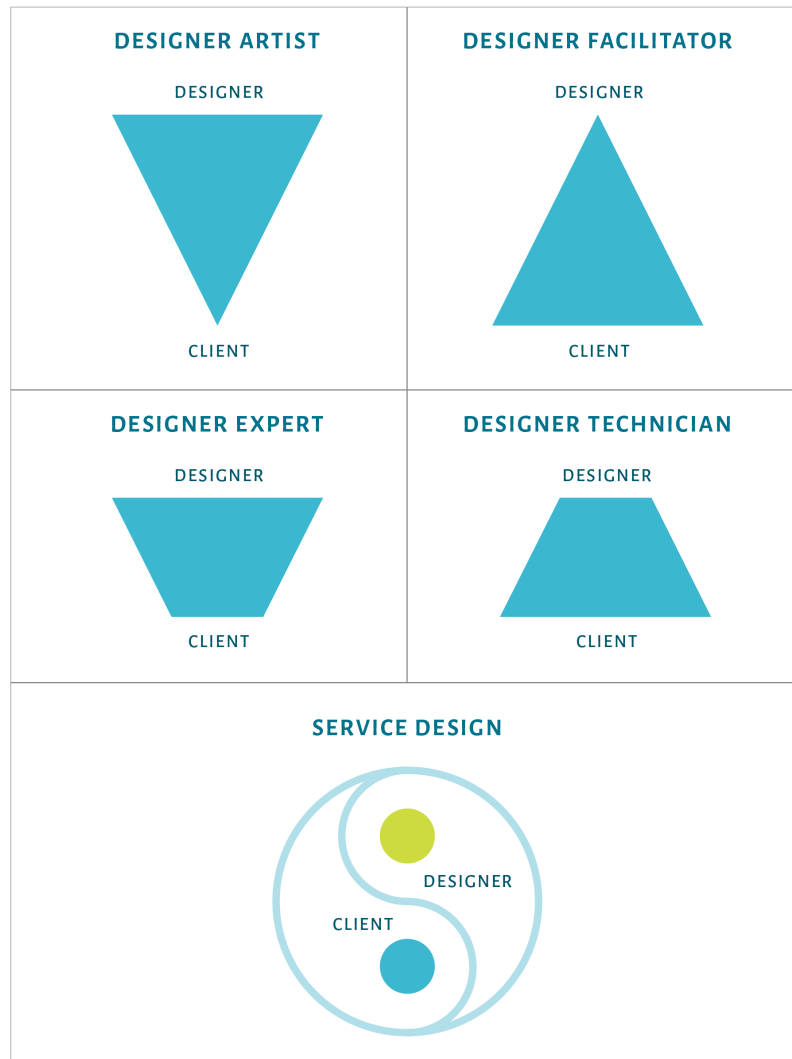


Figure 9: Designer–client relationships (adapted from Nelson & Stolterman 2012:48).

In contrast, the grounded theory of design citizenship shows how the concerned citizens, who make up a specific public or community, transcend the role of the client as the primary beneficiary of design. This suggests a new relationship, namely a designer–citizen relationship, which is more action-oriented and less product-oriented. As the substantive theory indicates, design citizenship affords concerned citizens the opportunity also to contribute and use design as a methodology and/or method for social change. Hence, in the same way that Dewey’s conception of a public becomes cohesive through communication, the relationship between the individual city actors becomes cohesive through the different design tools used during the initial process of design citizenship. This communicative role, specifically visual communication, speaks to the nature of design as a function in the designer–citizen relationship.

However, the role of design is not restricted to that of a function because a design intervention may certainly explore ideas and propose tangible solutions for the social issue that the intervention aims to address. Nonetheless, my research findings highlight that the key objective is that the designer–citizen relationships (that are realised during the phenomenon) are intended to create common ground for all actors through shared experiences and meaningful dialogue. As such, design citizenship’s emphasis on the design process as a whole resonates with Julier’s (2014:201) sentiment about the culture of design; he acknowledges “that the object of design might not be material or digital, but behavioural or attitudinal”. To him, design culture is an “encultured practice” (Julier 2014:213-214), a practice that couples action with the intent of “developing design as a transformative process or as a way of reconfiguring routine and outlooks”. Following from the value-driven process that the phenomenon facilitates, my research has found that design citizenship has the potential to unite the two entities, namely the designer and the citizen. To this end, the client is replaced by the citizen in Nelson and Stolterman’s service relationship and there is no longer a boundary line between the two entities. This shift implies that community, as a group of citizens, moves from Nelson and Stolterman’s (2012) view of them as beneficiaries or participants to being partners who can also exercise design authorship and other decision-making throughout the process. As such, within the context of design citizenship, the transaction between the designers and citizens is not financial, but rather skills- and value-driven.

The nature of the designer–citizen relationship reveals that design citizenship embraces design as both a function and a culture. Consequently, if one were to visualise the role of design (and by extension designers) within the context of design citizenship, it may be represented as a continuum that has design as a culture at one end and at the opposite end, design as a function. Each end of the continuum tabulated below takes the following variables into consideration: the conception of the city actor, the focus of the design action, the design outcome, as well as the design action’s relationship with the status quo (Table 10).

Owing to the collaborative and re-directive nature of design citizenship, the findings of my research highlight that in its ideal form, design citizenship is situated on the ‘design as a culture’ end of the continuum. As a culture, the changing relationship between the designer and other stakeholders speaks to capacity building by “building design-led skills among people to address challenges themselves” (Tan 2009:2). The grounded theory design citizenship shows evidence that instances of design activism have the potential to renegotiate the distribution of power evident in traditional designer–client relationships; the distribution of power begins with empowerment during the initial

phase of the phenomenon and ultimately aspires towards emancipation. This stance also extends design culture from a more commercial designer–client context to an everyday context that embraces critical citizenship and the potential to enable change through community action. Furthermore, owing to design citizenship’s civic underpinnings, the design culture that emerges from the designer–citizen relationship can be seen as promoting a design-led developmental agenda that is generative and productive rather than resistant (Thorpe 2014).

	DESIGN AS A FUNCTION	DESIGN AS A CULTURE
Role of city actor	Participant	Partner
Focus of design action	Object-oriented (prototype)	Process-oriented (experiment)
Predominant outcome	Commodity	Aesthetic experience
Relationship with status quo	Questions the status quo	Challenges the status quo

Table 10: Design as a function versus design as a culture.

In contrast, when the other two city actors, namely the confident corporates and the government officials, enter the designer–citizen relationship, the citizen-driven developmental agenda may be resisted or challenged by these actors. This was evident in the research findings in both the Pretoria- and Cape Town-based design interventions where driven designers and concerned citizens found themselves in a battle space when negotiating with the other city actors. For example, TLF leaders experienced many frustrating encounters with local government in Pretoria in the run-up to the Feast of the Clowns. While TLF members clearly supported the need for the Feast, in both their professional and personal capacities, the local municipality, by their politically motivated actions, seemed to be at odds with TLF’s drive to promote social justice in the city. As noted previously, one TLF member indicated that *“there’d always be this argument between us [TLF and local government]”* (Tshepang). Since the local municipality wanted to *“focus more on politically correct themes”* (Tshepang), TLF members were made to feel as though they were rebels and outcasts for questioning the status quo. The response from governmental representatives was that TLF is criticising and undermining the work they are trying to achieve. However, in their belief of freedom of speech, TLF created a “counter-narrative” as in Fuad-Luke’s (2009) conceptualisation of design activism. This counter-narrative, motivated by the desire for social change, saw TLF members

persevering in favour of the community and even cut ties with the government at one point. The following excerpt speaks to this resolute stance:

Tshepang: And what I like about TLF is they don't stop. I mean we've had, we've even cut ties with the Municipality because we felt like we were just now, ahem, we were pawns. We were pawns for their political advancement and their ANC strategies. So, yah, it's one of those things that had to come to an end so that ... we don't lose the main objective of why the Feast started more than ten years ago.

TLF's experience with government official's obstinacy is not unfamiliar. The SJC, together with community members from Khayelitsha who wanted to participate in a public hearing in Cape Town, were treated unfairly. According to one SJC member, "*it was really disgraceful what happened there*" (Dustin). He explains the barriers when wanting to participate at a civic level in the excerpt below:

Dustin: So, we arrived there [the public hearing], as soon as we got there, we had been standing there for few minutes, and a plain clothed law enforcement officer came outside and started interrogating people, and saying why are you here? What are you doing here? And ... then people showed him the public, the tickets, and he still persisted and said, why are you here? Who invited you? Do you have permission? ... So, eventually we said to him, we've got public tickets, we're coming to the speech, there's nothing you can do about it so I suggest that you just back off. So, he backed off. We then started walking inside. I walked inside with one of my colleagues, and then they tried to stop everyone else, the security outside. We went back outside, we had to argue with them ... we had this again, big fight, and then eventually we got inside. We got up to the council chamber and when we got upstairs, there were two metro police officers ... and they wouldn't let them, people inside and again, we could only go inside after fighting with them.

From these findings it follows that participation and partnership for design citizenship purposes are threatened and become exclusive when the concerned citizens and/or driven designers do not share the government officials' opinion of who has the right to access public spaces/events. Karen Malone (2002:157), who "examines city streets and public space as a domain in which social values are asserted and contested", shares a similar sentiment about resistance to difference experienced on the street; her vantage point is Australian youths on the streets. She states that "[p]oliticians and the media play a key role in exploiting our sensitivities [towards difference] in this regard, often demonizing events and people and encouraging containment and regulation of those at risk of hurting themselves or others" (Malone 2002:157).

Despite being met with resistance, the city actors affiliated with TLF and SJC took a decision to address repressive structures and barriers for participation in proactive ways. Their actions are suggestive of Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci's (1988) view that the subordinate/working class should not keep their "common sense" views, which support the status quo, at bay. Gramsci (1988) supported the idea of organic intellectuals who would respond to repressive structures and create a counter-hegemony. Hence, for purposes of design citizenship, I argue that driven designers and concerned citizens may be regarded as organic intellectuals who massage conversations about the social issue at hand; they also ignite agency in the city actors to tackle the situation they are faced with proactively. Moreover, my research found that these organic intellectuals are not speaking on behalf of a neglected group, as suggested by Thorpe (2011:6); instead, they are the enablers who give other city actors a platform to have their voices heard. As such, the research findings assert that the two dominant city actors use the city as their classroom and citizens as their learners.

This viewpoint of city actors playing the role of organic intellectuals is supported by the substantive theory specifically with regard to the concept of creating a platform for engagement. As explained in the previous chapter, education, both formal and informal, serves as forms of motivation for the creation of a participatory platform. Hence, the places of design citizenship refer to the facilitating environment, essentially the platform for engagement, which allows the city actors to plug in. In turn, the platform gives the actors a space for different relationships to play out, including but not restricted to the designer–citizen relationship. To this end, the platform for engagement channels Markussen's (2013:38) definition of the acts of design activism, which are not categorised as a "boycott, strike, protest, demonstration, or some other political act". Similarly, the platform for engagement that is created is more than an act of protest and "lends its power of resistance by being precisely a *designerly* way of intervening in people's lives" (Markussen 2013:38; emphasis in original). In this way, design interventions are less radical than Lefebvre's (1996) notion of "the right to the city", but they do share with it the emphasis on participation and mobilisation of inhabitants in a specific geographic setting, namely the city.

In contrast to being met with resistance, designers and citizens who primarily received support from confident corporates, and not government officials, tended to experience less threatening and hostile responses to their activism. This was evident in Cool Capital interventions as well as the Partnership's interventions. For example, City Properties, a commercial entity that partnered with Cool Capital in 2014, owns the spaces that Cool Capital initiatives needed to use, so there were no by-laws or other legal requirements that needed to be resolved. Furthermore, the following

comment from a City Property employee is significant: *“our MD has got a very soft heart for art, he’s got a very big art collection himself”* (Lize). This highlights two pertinent points. Firstly, it reiterates the impression from the data that a personal interest in art/design facilitates a smoother transition towards collaboration and partnership amongst city actors when creating a platform for engagement. Secondly, it supports many city actors’ views that formal creative-city designations, such as the World Design Capital in Cape Town, are in fact contested and closed spaces.

From the above it is clear that while the places of design citizenship are essentially meant to be inclusive and open spaces for public engagement, they are at risk of exclusivity, depending on the relationship between the city actors. The relationships between the city actors depend on the alignment of their respective interests and values. Furthermore, the relationships are also influenced by what Sibley (1995) terms “boundaries of power”, which can be categorised either as closed or open spaces. Closed spaces regulate and try to maintain the dominant group’s internal homogeneity. In this way, any difference in terms of participants is seen as a deviation and a disruption. In contrast, open spaces, such as “sporting venues, carnivals and festivals” (Malone 2002:159), have open boundaries; they permit differences and diversity of people and thereby help to build social and creative capital amongst citizens. Open spaces have the potential to foster a bridging form of social capital in line with Putnam’s (2000) argument that participation in communal, cultural activities allows diverse groups of people to interact and, consequently, drive political involvement. Open spaces, akin to open dialogues, are a trigger of the publics of design citizenship. Hence, similar to the construction of the phenomenon’s public, which is contingent on the context of the design intervention (including the specific social cause being addressed), the diverse places of design citizenship can also be regarded as social constructs that question and disrupt “geographies of power” (Malone 2002:158). While it is not within the scope of this research to unpack the contested places of design citizenship, my research recognises the politics of space and provides a point of departure for continuing research on the topic to tackle the different dynamics between the four city actors identified in this study.

5.3 The social processes that constitute the phenomenon of design citizenship

As previously noted, this study’s rich data recognise that the phenomenon of design citizenship does not comprise a single social process but is made of up three, interrelated processes, namely awakening awareness, igniting agency and sustaining a design thinking impetus. Each process takes shape through the actions of the public, and they play out in the places that are constructed specifically for the design intervention. The three processes occur gradually as drip feeds for the city

actors, with each feed fuelling the latter with design tools and other critical citizenship competencies to tackle social justice issues in a proactive and more directed manner. Each process is revisited below because, in relation to the people and places of design citizenship, these processes collectively inform the model of the phenomenon of design citizenship.

5.3.1 Awakening awareness

Awakening awareness, as the first process of design citizenship, is explained by the core concepts of suspending oneself and finding common ground through shared experience. Both these concepts, which emerged from the data, were underpinned by an educational focus. Hence, the process of awakening awareness in citizens was facilitated through the creation of learning encounters for the city actors. These learning encounters were shown to take place in real-time, on the ground, and consequently provided city actors with very visceral experiences if they took the decision to let go of their inhibitions and suspend themselves in a new and unfamiliar space. The visceral design activism experiences enabled the city actors to feel their way through the intervention in an individual capacity, as well as within the context of the larger group of participants. As such, the process of awakening awareness can be likened to building a metaphorical bridge between the city actors who begin to participate in a design intervention. As the data show, this bridging process is initiated by real-time dialogues among the actors with regard to shared interests and concerns. Once initiated, the conversations are not directed by any particular city actor; every city actor who is part of the intervention has an opportunity to contribute. Owing to the “equal level of control” that the platform of engagement affords the city actors, the process of awakening awareness is inextricably linked to the practice and processes of “democratic dialogues” (Huybrechts 2016). Huybrechts (2016) argues that democratic dialogues are enablers for making smart cities work; she sees them as capacity-building activities that are jumpstarted by designers with a view towards getting all participants to explore alternate futures. Basically, the value of democratic dialogues is that even if the space(s) of an intervention are closed and/or contested, the dialogues are intended to remain open throughout.

Huybrechts (2016), as part of her research on participatory design and spatial transformation processes in Belgium, puts forward a typology of democratic dialogues (Figure 10). Her typology comprises four different types of dialogues, each related to a specific design role. These four dialogues consist of open, strategic and tactical dialogues as well as dialogues of trust. The aim of her typology is to curb dichotomous stereotypes of participation found in current smart city discourse by exploring the breadth of dialogues that may unfold by the city actors. Dovey (2016:4),

for example, also speaks of two-fold concepts in urban assemblages, such as “formal/informal” and organised/self-organised”, to name a couple. In keeping with Huybrechts’ (2016) viewpoint of challenging these binaries, the substantive theory of design citizenship also disrupts normative practices of design activism by presenting the different roles that driven designers play during the design citizenship process as complementaries. Hence, the substantive theory advocates that the different designer roles and their related dialogues are interdependent when challenging the status quo perceptions of the social issue within the context of the city.

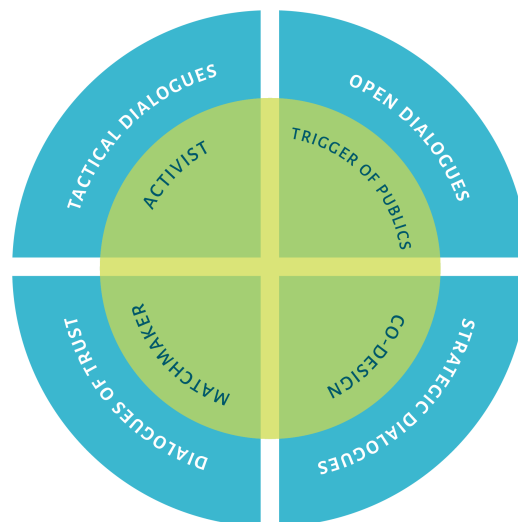


Figure 10: Huybrecht’s typology of democratic dialogues and the related roles for designers (adapted from Huybrechts 2016).

Furthermore, the data indicate that the democratic dialogues for design citizenship begin as collective articulations of the social problem and, as the phenomenon progresses, they evolve towards expressions of possible solutions. The collective articulations are expressed verbally by the city actors, but all the design interventions studied for purposes of this research indicate how spoken language is supported unequivocally and materialised by visual language. Visualisation tools such as sketching, mind-mapping and even taking photographs were some of the design tools used as part of the design citizenship process. Despite these tools being introduced during the awakening awareness phase of design citizenship, they are not restricted to it; the tools continue to be used by the city actors if and when needed. The civic potential of such tools is discussed in more detail in the next section.

Overall, the visualisations serve as talking points or probes for the city actors and help them to renegotiate their individual positions as well as their positions in relation to the other city actors.

The research findings reveal that such probes provide common ground for the city actors; they enable them to overcome their preconceived ideas and perceptions of both place and other people. However, despite uncovering similar actions and attitudes among the participants, this process does not impose consensus but rather shared understanding. Hence, as part of the informal learning encounter that design interventions afford citizens, the renegotiation process has the potential to effect deeper alterations through the “*conscientising of designers*” (Bruce) and other city actors. Drawing on Freire’s (1970:66) educational philosophy, he asserts that realising one’s consciousness is the point of departure towards praxis, “the action and reflection of men upon their world in order to transform it”. Hence, considering design citizenship in light of Freire’s philosophy, it can be argued that the conscientising of the city actors during the initial phase of the phenomenon helps to awaken their awareness by encouraging critical consciousness. Moreover, the first process of design citizenship has the potential to motivate liberating action if city actors sustain their involvement with the design intervention.

5.3.2 Igniting agency

The concept of igniting agency underpins the second process of design citizenship. During this phase of the phenomenon, the data showed how city actors start to exercise agency by taking risks and in so doing, they are able to present an alternate narrative. While the process of awakening awareness gave the city actors the opportunity to recognise that they have a voice as citizens, this second process sees the city actors acting on their newfound voice.

The action of taking risks means crossing the aforementioned invisible boundaries of power that hinder citizens from taking control of their environment and/or the social issues that influence them. Even though an attitude of risk-taking permeates design citizenship as a whole (as seen in the negotiation of space when trying to create a platform for engagement), the city actors not only question the current culture or common sense of the social issue in question, but they also begin to challenge the status quo in more directed and active ways as part of the process of igniting agency. Once again, the visualisation tools that were introduced during the awakening awareness process come to the fore; the tools are used as a means of creating a group of active producers as opposed to merely keeping the actors as passive consumers. In this way, the city actors begin to embrace and nurture a hands-on and hacking attitude, which favours practical knowledge and is a common trait of design activism practices. Interestingly, this process also recalls the constructivist grounded theory process used for this study where the data was initially taken apart and then synthesised in a conceptual framework.

The creation of a pool of producers from among the city actors also denotes another form of risk taking in that it turns the traditional roles of the respective actors on its head. To this end, alternate narratives are created and enacted by the city actors to challenge the status quo. The hacking attitude therefore begins to empower the city actors by putting the power of imagination in their hands. The city actors' actions are not at risk of being scripted³² by the existing material objects that may form part of the platform for engagement. Instead, the city actors begin to use the design tools to envision and subsequently even create new material forms and context-appropriate narratives for design citizenship purposes. To this end, while it may be argued that traditional and contemporary tools (including technology such as mobile phones) could be used to reinforce the status quo, the data reveal that the range of design tools used by the city actors was in fact convivial in nature in line with Ivan Illich's (1973) use of the term.

Illich (1973) situates his argument for convivial tools within the context of dismantling Western education's institutional authority; in particular, he advocated that tools be made available to people to make them independent and efficient. Thus, the term 'conviviality' is explained by Illich (1973:11) as an antonym for industrial productivity:

I intend it [conviviality] to mean autonomous and creative intercourse among persons, and the intercourse of persons with their environment; and this in contrast with the conditioned response of persons to the demands made upon them by others, and by a man-made environment. I consider conviviality to be individual freedom realized in personal interdependence and, as such, an intrinsic ethical value.

Based on its definition, when conviviality is used as an adjective for the word 'tools' it denotes that they are an expression of the user instead of the users being an extension of the tool. Within the context of this study, Illich's (1973) criticism of technocratic elites can be compared to the criticism of Florida's (2002) ideas of the creative class being an exclusive group. Hence, the overarching process of igniting agency challenges the status quo through the ongoing provision of learning opportunities and access to convivial tools for all city actors involved. In light of the findings of my research, the argument put forward here is that design activism provides the city actors with a toolbox containing such convivial tools.

³² The action of "scripting" is found in discourse on race and racism. In particular, the reference to scripting in the context of design citizenship here is informed by Bernstein's (2009) notion of material objects "scripting" audiences as well as Appiah's (1990) viewpoint that individual autonomy is constrained when people of colour are required to script their behaviour. In both views, issues of performativity and the states of being and becoming feature as recurring tropes and may be equated with the distinction between what is an act and what is real.

With regard to scale, the act of taking risks operates on a micro-level rather than on a macro-level. As highlighted in the previous chapter, working at an incremental scale helps citizens to initiate a counter-hegemony. To reiterate, the example by one of the city actors in Cape Town about breaking up large groups of city actors into groups of 49 to bypass the status quo speaks to this point. Accordingly, by drawing again on Gramsci's philosophy, one can gather that the actions of the city actors are based on questioning the dominant ideology in proactive, non-violent ways. Gramsci's non-violent and reformist idea of change can also be found in the work of Friedrich Schiller (1954) who argued that people need to be flexible, resourceful and imaginative but non-violent in their attempts at a revolution. This line of reasoning by Schiller was recorded in one of his seminal works, *Letters on the aesthetical education of man*, first written in 1793 (Wertz 2005:80). These so-called aesthetic letters were motivated by the social and political upheaval in France at the time; in particular, Schiller's philosophical response was regret of the violence that ensued as a result of the French Revolution. In response, he wrote the letters as a critique of the French government's failure to align their principles with their actions.

The alternate narratives that result from taking risks are shown to be inextricably linked to the cultures of the respective city actors. For example, food was raised by one city actor as a storytelling mechanism to engage other actors in non-threatening ways. To this end, alternate narratives have the potential to instil a sense of curiosity and deeper understanding of different cultures in ways that the differences are not merely tolerated, but rather admired. According to Sommer (2014:30-31), "admiration is the feeling that sustains democracy ... A much stronger feeling than tolerance, admiration is an aesthetic response of surprise and wonder".

The democratic access to culture that alternate narratives provide enables city actors to embrace indigenous knowledge for social justice ends and thus to promote "culture-led development" (Ferilli, Sacco & Blessi 2011). Despite Ferilli et al.'s (2011) economic vantage point, their notion of "system-wide cultural districts" puts forward cultural participation and production as strategic modes of production for purposes of local development. According to them (Ferilli et al. 2011:264-265),

once a culturally exposed audience get systematically trained to put into question their prejudices through regular attendance to stimulating events, shows, workshops and so on, this readiness towards the unexpected also becomes applicable in their daily professional activity whenever they have to face non-standard problems calling for creative solutions.

Similarly, the process of igniting agency is an experiential learning process that nurtures the creative and civic capabilities of the city actors in ways that empower them beyond the intervention and

increase their status of human flourishing, thereby improving their well-being as citizens (Nussbaum, M 2011).

5.3.3 Sustaining a design thinking impetus

The third process of design citizenship, namely sustaining a design thinking impetus, is underpinned by a focus on continuing aesthetic education in general, and critical citizenship education in particular. At this point of the phenomenon, the city actors have gathered creative and critical thinking skills and experience the feeling of walking “away feeling enriched, perhaps even claiming some ownership of the experience or the ability to reproduce it with others” (Helguera 2011). This view speaks to Jacques Rancière’s (2004:9) ideas of how a “distribution of the sensible”, as “configurations of experience that create new modes of sense perception” results in “a community of narrators and translators”. Similarly, the substantive theory of design citizenship has revealed that during this final phase of design citizenship, city actors can become change agents by playing it forward. In turn, the city actors have the potential to educate themselves and others through new networks. The creation of new networks can in fact be viewed as creating a platform for engagement, which denotes that the phenomenon comes full circle and is probably sustainable.

In their capacity as change agents, the city actors use design and play as tools to encourage new city actors to address and tackle civic issues. City actors are introduced to design tools in the first two phases of design citizenship and in this third phase, these tools are maintained by the community of existing users. The nature of this third process of design citizenship also makes it clear that the city actor’s exposure to design during the earlier phase of the design citizenship phenomenon can facilitate an understanding of the broader role of design as a tool for citizens to shape and reimagine their immediate urban and social environments. To this end, design as a culture can facilitate participatory power as well as new partnerships or networks among citizens, which are led by the change agents; this leadership position as a change agent is not restricted to the driven designers and can be held by any of the city actors who feel confident enough to mobilise citizens.

As noted in Chapter One, the view of design thinking as a leadership approach is becoming increasingly prominent. Adler (2011:7), for example, is in support of design thinking as a complement to traditional leadership approaches; according to her, “[t]wenty-first century society yearns for a leadership of possibility, a leadership based more on hope, aspiration, innovation, and beauty than on the replication of historical patterns of constrained pragmatism”. Accordingly, design citizenship’s practice of anticipating, envisioning and proposing counter-narratives is echoed by

Grant Kester (2000), who recognises the power of aesthetics. According to him, “the aesthetic provides us with the unique power to comprehend and represent the future” (Kester 2000:2). Furthermore, the idea of ‘experienced aesthetic qualities in the real-world resonates strikingly with Dewey’s philosophy of aesthetic experience. Much like the concept of design citizenship being a drip-feeding process of self-discovery and civic action, to Dewey (1934:44) experience is an iterative process of the relationship between “doing and undergoing”; hence, it can be inferred that design interventions provide city actors with an aesthetic education vehicle for “doing and undergoing”, and as a result have the potential for transformative learning opportunities.

The aesthetic learning opportunities that are characteristic of the phenomenon of design citizenship echo Rancière’s (2004) philosophy of the “aesthetic regime of art”. Rancière’s (2004) focus on aesthetics moves away from his impressions of two earlier regimes of art that focused on the idea of art as imitation (mimesis) and mere representation towards a third, aesthetic regime of art. According to him, this third aesthetic regime has the potential to break down social and political hierarchies that are inherent in the other two regimes. Similarly, this third design citizenship process sees the democratisation of design in that it is open for use to a much wider audience. Rancière’s three regimes of art can be applied to the representation of the primary purpose of design during the different process of design citizenship; as the phenomenon of design citizenship begins to unfold and take shape, the role of design shifts from being a function to becoming a culture. Owing to its nature, sustaining a design thinking impetus can therefore be correlated with Rancière’s third regime of art. It should be noted here that the correlation between design and an art regime is distanced from the debate about what constitutes art and design as independent entities and looks instead at the role of aesthetic experience and abductive modes of thinking and doing, which inform the social processes of design citizenship.

During this latter stage of the phenomenon, the aesthetic is not sacrificed for the sake of the political, but the two are both moments of “the distribution of the sensible” (Rancière 2004) to effect social change. Rancière’s (2004) aesthetic regime of art therefore supports the argument for design, and by extension design activism, to play a greater role for design in society, specifically towards critical citizenship ends. Holm (2010:5) points out that an aesthetic experience “promises the possibility of a sensory revolution ... more profound than any revolution at the level of the state”. Likewise, German philosopher Schiller (1954:27) eloquently states in the second letter of his series *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* that “it is through beauty that we arrive at freedom”.

Schiller (1954) promoted the idea of an aesthetic education as a way of solving political problems. Since Schiller (1954) accepts humans to be linked inextricably to the political, he further argues that humans must gain an aesthetic education in order to exercise their own will in order to become moral and rational beings within a political context. This move towards freedom through aesthetic experience recalls the argument that driven designers and concerned citizens can play the role of Gramsci's (1998) "organic intellectuals" in society. However, what makes Schiller's thinking unique with regard to the idea of beauty is his focus on what he terms the 'play drive'. His idea of the play drive has merit for the concept of playing it forward and is discussed below in relation to design citizenship.

Schiller's (1954) conception of aesthetics focuses on the fact that the human character comprises two fundamental impulses or drives, namely a formal drive and a sensuous drive. The formal drive stems from one's rational nature while the sensuous drive is concerned with one's physical and intuitive nature. It is when these two interdependent drives are conjoined that the result is beauty, and this conjoining of the two drives is what Schiller terms the 'play drive'. Schiller (1954:80) was of the opinion that "man only plays when he is in the fullest sense of the word a human being, and he is only fully a human being when he plays". In addition, Schiller (1954:74) believes that the "play impulse, in which both combine to function, will compel the mind at once morally and physically" and helps create an equilibrium. For Schiller, the idea of nurturing this play drive is important because he sees it as a way to make individuals more attentive to particularities so that over time their heightened perception may ultimately lead to social justice.

More recently, Miguel Sicart (2014) has proposed a theory of play that resonates with Schiller's stance;³³ his theory postulates that play is a mode of being human and is inextricably linked to one's daily reality. For design citizenship, these philosophical and pragmatic viewpoints on play show how the act of playing can marry a city actor's sensuous and rational existence. Ultimately, it is in this space that the city actors can move from merely being empowered to being emancipated.

³³ Johan Huizinga's seminal work, *Homo Ludens* (1949), is also worth mentioning here with regard to the role of the play element of culture. Huizinga (1949:2), a Dutch anthropologist, asserted that play has a "profoundly aesthetic quality" and is interwoven with culture. To this end, Huizinga unpacks the nature of play by exploring different social manifestations of play. Sicart (2014:104) eloquently explains Huizinga's contribution as follows: "Homo Ludens was Huizinga's interpretation of a third dominant anthropology of humans. If *Homo sapiens* was the being of reason, and *Homo faber* the being of production, *Homo ludens* would be the being of play". While *Homo Ludens* may be regarded as a relatively outdated book, Huizinga's work has had considerable influence on the history of gaming and continues to inform the understanding of play in a contemporary context, particularly mobile gaming.

Following from the above, it becomes evident that design citizenship as a holistic learning encounter exists and operates at the intersection of aesthetic education and critical citizenship education to explore and embrace the possibility of a new social reality. In keeping with the idea of a sensory revolution, the research findings indicate that design citizenship has the potential to provide a level playing field for all city actors. Furthermore, in its ideal form (during the third process), it has the potential to liberate participants while at the same time establishing a commitment to uphold civic values towards the ends of social justice.

5.4 The Y-shaped model of the phenomenon of design citizenship

The phenomenon of design citizenship unfolds as each of the three processes of design citizenship come into being. In order for the phenomenon to be realised to its full potential though, the city actors must experience all three processes. As previously mentioned, the consecutive processes are visualised as an inverted pyramid, and accordingly a funnel analogy is used to explain the drip feeding of design investments that take place over a sustained period of time. The Y-shaped model of design citizenship that follows is therefore informed by the Y-shape of the funnel diagram (Figure 11) and is used to explain how the phenomenon operates at the intersection of design activism, aesthetic experiences and critical citizenship. Moreover, the discussion puts forward the argument that the phenomenon of design citizenship has the potential to create what I call ‘Y-shaped thinkers’ through informal learning opportunities. This argument uses the idea of designers as T-shaped³⁴ thinkers as a springboard, which posits that designers must have the depth of knowledge of their discipline or area of specialisation and also have a breadth of knowledge or understanding of other disciplines in order to tackle increasingly complex design problems (Brown 2009:27). Hence, this dual need forms the pictorial representation of the T-shape where the stem of the T represents disciplinary or functional skills and the crossbar of the T connotes interdisciplinarity and application of knowledge across a broader range of situations.

The Y-shaped model of design citizenship is more dynamic than a T-shape in that it allows for more fluid yet focused movement of both design activism and civic experiences owing to the drip-feeding process that takes place over time. To take this analogy forward, the drip-feeding process serves as a natural filter towards more appropriate decision-making because there is a clearer reference point to work towards: that is, the social justice issue at hand. Interestingly, the drip-feeding process also resonates with the earlier proposal of seeing the city as a classroom; similarly, this viewpoint recalls

³⁴ The T-shaped concept is not exclusive to design; it is also used in other disciplines such as management and education, to name a couple.

Dovey's (2016:246) reference of urban design thinking as "a school where knowledge spreads by osmosis".

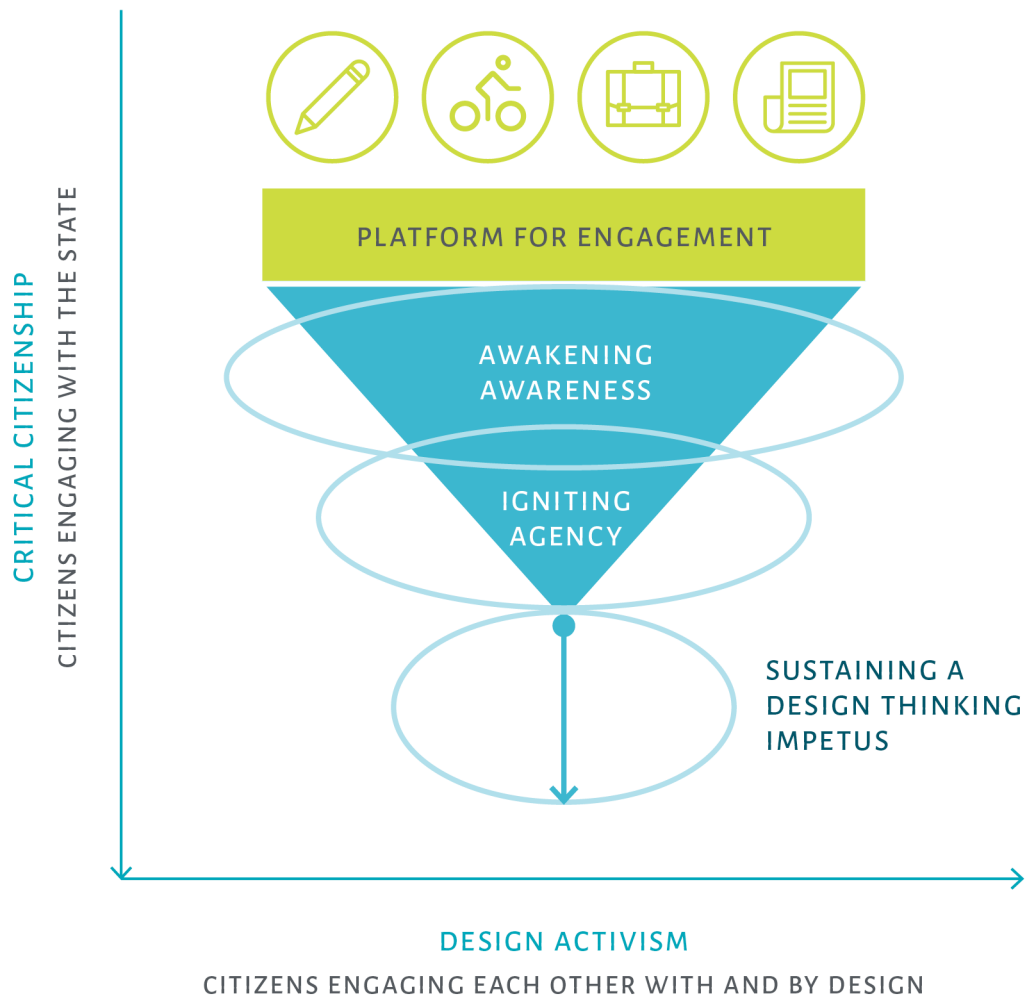


Figure 11: The Y-shaped model of design citizenship.

Another reason that sets the Y-shaped model apart from the T-shaped model is the fact that it acknowledges and signifies the multifaceted nature of design citizenship. Whereas T-shaped thinking is focused on an individual's knowledge and problem-processing skills, Y-shaped thinking recognises the complexity of the different relationships between the city actors who contribute towards the processes of design citizenship and who are ultimately responsible for shaping the phenomenon. Hence, the Y-shaped model is inclusive of both personal and interpersonal civic relationships. Accordingly, the Y-shaped model is also informed by the following multidimensional representation of active citizenship "as a multi-dimensional image that includes vertical relationships (citizens engaging with the state) and horizontal relationships (citizens engaging with and among themselves)" (Van Donk, in Matola 2014).

Based on the research findings, the horizontal axis of the Y-shaped model represents the city actors' use of design. The use of design is facilitated and encouraged by the informal learning opportunities that design activism provides, through the creation of an accessible platform for engagement. The tools for these learning opportunities, which equip the driven designers with convivial tools to fill the role of organic intellectuals, are design and play. The central role that design plays when it intersects with critical citizenship in fact challenges the notion that "good design is good citizenship",³⁵ where good design is equated with aesthetic perfection. For purposes of design citizenship, this does not imply that design and design thinking should be divorced from aesthetics; design philosopher, Cameron Tonkinwise (2011) shares this viewpoint. Instead, it speaks to the breadth of the horizontal axis of the Y-shaped model by embracing the breadth of different types of aesthetics such as "agonistic, convivial or conceptual aesthetics in new social design" (Koskinen 2016:18).³⁶ The use of these different types of aesthetics is contingent on the context of the intervention and are selected based on the design role at a given time in the phenomenon.

Being led initially by the driven designers, the other city actors have a hands-on opportunity to learn and nurture abductive ways of thinking and doing that are productive and proactive. These experiential learning opportunities are driven by the social issue at hand, which provide the context for the city actors to learn more about themselves and one another. As such, the breadth of the horizontal axis represents the breadth of the learning curve for the city actors. This learning curve facilitates the extensive creative and social capital that may be accumulated through the processes of design citizenship. Essentially, the accumulation of these types of capital facilitates empowerment of the city actors and even has the potential to emancipate them. The scope of roles that city actors are equipped to play through this process speaks to this viewpoint of empowerment. Examples of this from the research findings include the range of roles that driven designers play, as well as the fact that any city actor has the potential to assume a leadership role and become a change agent if and when the phenomenon comes full circle. This contribution to different types of capital resonates with Fuad-Luke's (2009) five capitals framework of design activism, but for purposes of design citizenship, these capitals are the communal creative spaces that exert aesthetic and civic influence on the city actors. To this end, the "disruptive aesthetic" experiences (Markussen 2013) that the horizontal axis represents are inextricably linked to the kinds of liberating aesthetic experiences that Dewey and Schiller advocate.

³⁵ Milton Glaser, the renowned American graphic designer, is recognised as being the proponent of the notion that "good design is good citizenship" (Heller & Vienne 2003:ix).

³⁶ Koskinen (2016), when unpacking his argument about the shift from historically understood social design to a new social design, roots his discussion in three types of aesthetics that he believes underpins new social design practices.

For design citizenship, the vertical axis of the Y-shaped model represents the city actors' critical citizenship trajectory from the time preceding involvement with an instance of design activism, namely a design intervention. This axis is therefore useful to explain the following conceptions of the type of design citizens:

- non-participant (pre-design intervention)
- token participant (passive observer)
- proactive participant (having clear self-direction as a result of empowerment)
- partner (moving from empowerment to emancipation).

These conceptions are directly related to the processes of design citizenship where each type of design citizen from 'token participant' onwards corresponds to the processes of awakening awareness, igniting agency and sustaining a design thinking impetus, respectively. These conceptions can be further overlaid with Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) conceptions of different types of citizens. Their trajectory includes personally responsible citizens, participatory citizens and justice-oriented citizens. Similar to Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) conception of a justice-oriented citizen, citizens as partners within the context of design citizenship are the ideal type of design citizens because of their desire for a socially-just community and country. These conceptions of different type of design citizens are informed by an informal critical citizenship education that happens through the processes of design citizenship. To explain, critical citizenship education speaks to the process of critical thinking and/or "a desire to encourage engagement, action and political emancipation" (Johnson & Morris 2010:77). It aims to open educational means through which the voices of the city actors could engage with, and reflect on their social circumstances in a proactive manner that will enable them to take action to challenge and hopefully improve the status quo. The vertical leg of the Y-shaped model is therefore focused on the depth of critical citizenship education and related actions that the phenomenon may allow a city actor to tap into.

In essence, the two axes of the Y-shaped model discussed above make visible how design activism interfaces with critical citizenship. More significantly, it is at this important intersection between the vertical and horizontal relationships and processes that design citizenship is situated and enacted. Overlaying these multi-layered relationships and processes, such as education and design, with the three processes of design citizenship shows how they are inextricably linked. The findings of the research, which are tabulated below (Table 11), therefore allow me to conclude that the relationship between design activism and citizenship is causal in nature. This implies that the exposure to design activism over a sustained period of time is directly proportional to a change of civic outlook and

behaviour in the city actors. This behaviour change is in keeping with the nature of critical citizenship because it encourages the development of shared civic values that have the potential to cultivate socially aware and responsible citizens in a post-apartheid, multicultural country such as South Africa.

THREE PROCESSES OF DESIGN CITIZENSHIP	TYPE OF DESIGN CITIZEN	REPRESENTATION OF DESIGN	REPRESENTATION OF LEARNING (AS PART OF THE PHENOMENON)	DEGREE OF AUTONOMY (AS PART OF THE PHENOMENON)
Awakening awareness ↑	Token participant ↑	Design as function ↑	Surface learning ↑	Empowerment ↑
Igniting agency ↓	Proactive participant ↓	Design as culture ↓	Deep, transformative learning ↓	Emancipation ↓
Sustaining a design thinking impetus	Partner			

Table 11: Overview of the research findings.

5.5 Summary

The city actors' experiences of the instances of design activism allowed me to arrive at the substantive theory of the phenomenon of design citizenship, which was unpacked critically in this chapter in relation to extant theories of design, aesthetic education and critical citizenship. The relationship between these three tenets of design citizenship as explained through the Y-shaped model highlighted the recurring theme of the phenomenon, namely the intersection of aesthetic and political acts through design. To this end, the discussion in this chapter highlighted that the form of the phenomenon of design citizenship is characterised by complexity owing to the blurring of boundaries and roles of traditional citizenship and also traditional design practices. Furthermore, in terms of its socio-cultural implications, design citizenship calls into question traditional citizenship's separation between included and excluded people and challenges it by providing common ground for all city actors through design.

Since the intention of design citizenship is to work towards a changing civic reality by providing counter-narratives to the status quo, the motivations for the phenomenon include the promotion of knowledge towards action (skills development and capacity building) and ultimately the promotion of social justice. While it is not guaranteed that the aesthetic disruptions that design citizenship facilitates will result in democracy, it can be argued that they certainly try to move closer to it by creating new “mental modes” (Vink, Wetter-Edman & Aguirre 2017) or a “redistribution of the sensible” (Rancière 2004). As such, the discussion of the relationship between design activism and citizenship reveals how the power of design citizenship is informed by the “power of temporary and tactical urbanism” (in other words design activism) in that “it shifts the ontology of the city [and its actors] from being towards becoming; it opens a space of possibility” (Dovey 2016:242). Similarly, the next chapter of this thesis concludes the study and opens the space of possibility for further research on the topic.

CHAPTER SIX CONCLUDING THE RESEARCH

6.1 Introduction

It is accepted by the constructivist school of grounded theory that the conclusion to a substantive grounded theory study is contextually suggestive rather than being prescriptive. Hence, now that an interpretation and critical discussion of the social phenomenon have been presented in the two preceding chapters, it is necessary to conclude my research, leaving it “open to future critique and reformulation” (Birks & Mills 2015:126). Accordingly, Chapter Six revisits the aims and objectives of the study by reflecting on how the study responded to the research question; this is done by providing a brief overview of the chapters that constitute the thesis. Subsequently, an evaluation of the grounded theory study is presented to determine the quality and usefulness of the research. As a result, the strengths and weaknesses of the study are considered before concluding with the study’s contribution to the field and, ultimately, the recommendations for further research.

6.2 Overview of the study

Chapter One situated the research by contextualising design activism and citizenship in order to substantiate the main aim of the study. The first chapter therefore presented and motivated the purpose of the research, namely to use a grounded theory methodology to address the theoretical deficit on the topic of design citizenship, from a design activism vantage point. More specifically, I explained how I would explore the relationship between design activism and citizenship by focusing on design interventions in two cities in South Africa; the design interventions were positioned as the research lens through which the city actors’ actions and experiences were explored. The introductory chapter also expressed my personal philosophical position as a reflective practitioner, which was aligned with Burrell and Morgan’s (1979) radical humanist paradigm. Chapters Two and Three followed by explaining the research methodology and the research design of the study, respectively.

Chapter Two presented a comprehensive, historic overview of the grounded theory methodology to explicate the four variants or schools of grounded theory currently in use. In light of the research aim, this discussion substantiated the selection of Charmaz’s constructivist school of grounded theory for my study. To this end, Chapter Two unpacked the principles of constructivist grounded theory and also critically considered the interpretive, and hence relative and reflexive, role of the researcher in such a study. Moreover, this chapter framed the aim of the study and its supporting

methodology from a social justice perspective. The social justice framework also informed the criteria to evaluate a grounded theory study, which concluded the discussion in the second chapter.

Thereafter, Chapter Three presented the research design of the study. Essentially, the research design made explicit the philosophical underpinnings of the study, which were covered in Chapter Two, through an explanation of the pragmatic grounded theory research methods employed for the concurrent processes of data generation and data analysis. Since I focused exclusively on a constructivist grounded theory methodology, I needed to maintain research rigour by communicating to the reader the research methods that were used for the study. Intensive interviews with research participants (categorised later as the four key city actors) were explained as the primary data generation method, supported further by the research methods used to produce theory from the data that were generated. These methods included various stages of coding, constant comparative analysis and memo writing.

Whereas the first three chapters laid the philosophical and operational foundation of the research, Chapter Four showed tactical ability by relating the constructivist grounded theory methods to achieve a particular result, namely the theoretical framework of design citizenship. The framework, presented in a narrative format as the Four Ps framework of design citizenship, comprised key categories and concepts grounded in the data to make sense of the people, places and processes of the social phenomenon under study. The categories and concepts were informed by the actions and experiences of the research participants; moreover, the core concepts were not only apparent in the actions and experiences of individual actors but also in the interaction between actors. More specifically, my theoretical interpretation was anchored by the supporting empirical evidence, included by way of interview excerpts. Since a reflexive approach is emphasised by constructivist research, I tried to maintain ethical integrity by also including auto-ethnographic data from my first-hand experience with design interventions, albeit in a research capacity.

In keeping with the main aim of the research, the overall outcome was a substantive theory of the phenomenon of design citizenship. The phenomenon was explained by means of three overarching social processes, which formed a funnel or Y-shaped theoretical model; these three processes form part of a larger process of critical design citizenship, discussed in detail in Chapter Five. In this penultimate chapter, the critical analysis of the processes moved the conversation beyond description to understand the nuances of the phenomenon over time as experienced by the four city

actors at different points in the funnel. Here, the substantive theory entered into a dialogue with extant theory to contextualise it and to consider the implications for both design and citizenship.

6.3 Self-evaluation of meeting the criteria for a grounded theory study

As noted in Chapter Three, there are a number of determinants to establish the quality of a grounded theory study. I used Charmaz's (2014b) four classic criteria of a constructivist grounded theory specifically for social justice inquiry, namely credibility, originality, resonance and usefulness, to demonstrate the quality/value of the study to my readers. Although the self-evaluation is an explicit form of reflexivity for a grounded theory study, owing to the constructivist approach, my research is also open for evaluation by the reader by way of my presentation of the substantive theory.

6.3.1 Credibility

Credibility, simply put, refers to the trustworthiness of the research. Owing to the social justice concerns of this research, credibility was a key issue to ensure that my study remained committed to the social justice perspective advocated at the onset of the study. In order to achieve this aim, there were a number of research-related actions of which I was mindful. Firstly, I sought to understand my research participants' actions and experiences by immersing myself in their immediate environments to examine their geographic and cultural points of reference. Since my intention was to articulate a substantive theory (as opposed to a formal grounded theory), this decision to become familiar with the fieldwork setting emphasised the particularity of the study. All the participants whom I interviewed had first-hand experience with the selected design interventions, which resulted in a broad range of data that I could tap into for analysing and theorising. The different personal and professional capacities that informed the participants' experiences provided me with a more holistic view for purposes of interpretation. I ensured that my interpretation was grounded in the data, hence the extensive use of lengthy excerpts from my interview transcripts to retain the voice of the research participants.

Furthermore, the rigour that was applied to the data generation process was similarly applied to the data analysis process to maintain consistency and integrity throughout the study. Although the manual coding process became overwhelming at times because of the sheer volume of data generated, it allowed me to remain close to the data. The manual coding process also facilitated much easier constant comparative analysis of the data (in both audio and written form); the continuous comparative analysis, which is an integral process of a grounded theory study, added

another level of reliability to ensure that the data generated was accurately represented in the interview transcripts. Lastly, my grounded theory research design explicated in Chapter Three serves as a detailed blueprint for the reader to facilitate an independent assessment of my research.

6.3.2 Originality

The originality of my research rests on the underpinning motivation and related aim of the research to “offer a fresh or deeper understanding of the studied phenomenon” (Charmaz 2014a:288) of design citizenship, which had not been sufficiently considered previously. Hence, the theoretical significance of the substantive theory is on “extending current ideas” (Charmaz 2014a:289) about design activism’s potential to instil and thereby nurture critical citizenship competence in citizens. To this end, the theoretical interpretations of the data are clearly situated at the intersection between design activism and critical citizenship. The study also makes an original contribution to discourse on design research because other qualitative studies in the area of design activism have not shown the use of grounded theory as an exclusive research methodology; this methodological contribution of my research is elaborated on in more detail in section 6.5 below.

While my disciplinary vantage point makes an original contribution specifically to design activism discourse, the substantive theory can also add to the current body of work on critical citizenship; it may be of value to discussions about the role of design (and more broadly all creative disciplines that fall under the rubric of the arts) for civic engagement and civic education. Moreover, the implications of a grounded theory go beyond a theoretical contribution and also have “a pragmatic reach” (Charmaz 2014b:184-185). As a result, the social significance of the research is to inform the development and implementation of future design interventions; this contribution to how the grounded theory may inform practice and citizens’ lived experiences responds to my research participants’ aforementioned questions about the value of the research for them. Because citizenship provides the value framework for what it means to be a member of society, it is envisioned that the research may extend even further to other diverse areas such as public policy and public sector service provision, essentially for the purpose of the common good.

6.3.3 Resonance

The resonance of my substantive theory is informed by its credibility and originality because it offers a deeper look at the city actors’ lived experiences while participating in a design intervention. In addition, links were drawn between individuals and the institutions they may be affiliated with throughout the three processes that make up the larger social phenomenon. To this end, the reach

of the theory is broad in that it emphasises and situates not only the actors on a design citizenship continuum, but also the different roles of design in each of these phases. Hence, the theory “portrays the fullness of the studied experience” (Charmaz 2014b:185) of the social phenomenon.

6.3.4 Usefulness

As a criterion, usefulness questions how a grounded theory produces knowledge and in turn how this knowledge may be useful when applied. This speaks to a knowledge process, articulated by Owen (1998) as comprising a knowledge-using phase and a knowledge-building phase. This cyclical process (as seen in Figure 12) echoes a reflection process by a designer; one that sees productive action (a paradigm of application) coupled with responsible follow-through (a paradigm of inquiry). Similarly, this research can be situated within the paradigm of inquiry that sets into motion a responsible and ethical scholarly inquiry of instances of design activism as a productive form of design for the common good. As noted under the credibility criterion, the grounded theory process resulted in a deeper understanding of an unprecedented area of study. Since understanding informs action, and the social underpinnings of the study necessitate that the findings of the research contribute towards better social circumstances for citizens, the research will be useful to designers and also NGO representatives when undertaking the development and implementation of design interventions in the future.

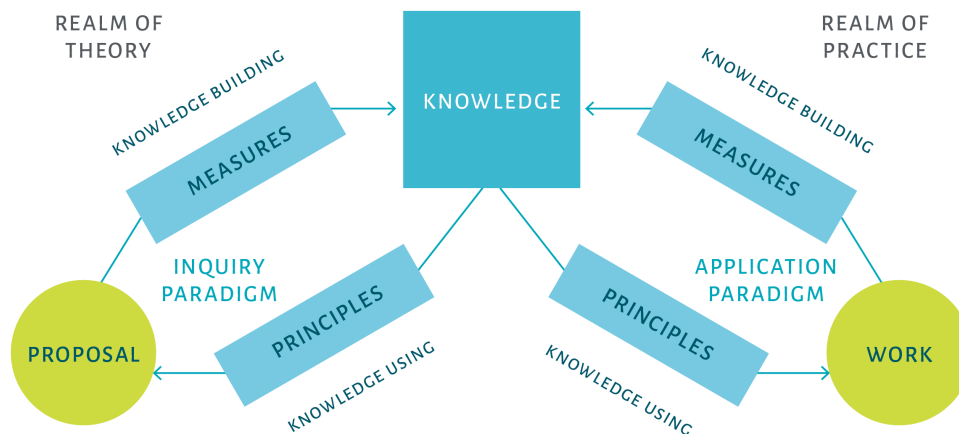


Figure 12: Knowledge cycle: using and accumulating knowledge (adapted from Owen 1998).

Grounded theory research, like design, is a problem-processing process that not only results in contextually appropriate answers, but also informs new research questions about the application of grounded theory in the real-world. For example, now that the substantive theory of design

citizenship has been articulated, how might it be put into practice? How can one measure the success of design citizenship? Hence, the usefulness of my research as a springboard for further research is also apparent in the recommendations for further research at the end of this chapter.

6.4 Strengths and limitations of the study

Assessing the strengths and limitations of a study provides the researcher with an opportunity to critically demonstrate how the research problem was answered. Hence, it is necessary to reiterate the research problem. Owing to the gap in the literature on the theoretical concept of design citizenship, the research question, namely “What is the relationship between design activism and citizenship” was posed. To this end, a grounded theory methodology was chosen as the appropriate methodology to answer this question. Upon reflection, it became evident that the strength of this grounded theory study lies in the quality/integrity of the research, which was ensured by maintaining methodological robustness throughout the study, as explained in the preceding self-evaluation section. As a result, the principal strength of the study is its outcome, that is the substantive theory of design citizenship. In addition, other strengths of the study lie in its personal and epistemological implications. On a personal level as the primary investigator, the study nurtured and honed my constructivist grounded theory research skills. From an epistemological perspective, the constructivist grounded theory methodology facilitated the questioning of the nature and extent of new design knowledge. This perspective therefore contributes to understanding the nature of research for design and research by design, and also advances methods of production of design knowledge.

Conversely, there are also limitations of the study that need to be acknowledged. Firstly, the limits of language cannot be excluded, especially when employing a constructivist methodology for interpretation. While every effort was made to ensure that research participants were comfortable to converse in English, verbal language may not always be able to convey the depth of a research participant’s experience. Language may have also hindered my processes of analysing and theorising in that there may have been ambiguities that may have been unknowingly overlooked. Secondly, a related limitation could be that research participants may have withheld certain information about their experience when being interviewed. Thirdly, a possible critique that may be levelled against the study is that despite other city actors being interviewed, the focus is largely on the role played by designers. The sample ensured variation but, owing to the substantive nature of the theory, it does not suggest generalisability and therefore cannot be extended to a wider network of South African citizens without further contextual analysis. Likewise, while the study is inclusive of different

racial groups in South Africa, the demographics of the research participants do not necessarily reflect those of the country. Lastly, the study was limited to a time period between 2015 and 2017; however, theoretical saturation was reached during this time.

6.5 Contributions of the study

Since design research and design practice are inextricably linked as paradigms of inquiry and practice respectively, the contributions of the study are also in both areas. From the perspective of inquiry, over and above the core theoretical contribution that advances the conceptualisation of the phenomenon of design citizenship, the significant methodological contribution of this study is the argument that constructivist grounded theory is ontologically suited to design research. There are a number of reasons why this study concludes that a grounded theory methodology is well suited for design research in general, and design activism in particular. These are explained below.

The tenets that make up the process of a constructivist grounded theory study are akin to design activism processes. As is evident in this thesis, both processes are iterative in nature, each striving towards the contextual understanding of a particular situation. In addition, while trying to uncover and grapple with the data being generated, both processes favour the voice of the research participants, but do not exclude the researcher's/designer's voice. In both processes, the primary investigator serves as the key author and interpreter of the research findings. Hence, in keeping with a constructivist ontology and epistemology, the study reinforces a more subjective position for the design researcher, which extends the traditional role of the researcher as being merely an objective observer. This echoes the contemporary role of designers who are nowadays included at the front end of social innovation with other key actors, notably the end users. In such contexts, reciprocal relationships between all parties are desired. As such, the underpinning guiding principles for the respective participants include direct involvement, trust and empathy; these principles are informed and guided by abductive modes of reasoning. To this end, the criteria of evaluating a grounded theory study resonate very closely with the values (and by extension, the criteria or measures) of design as a stand-alone discipline. Values – such as appropriateness and effectiveness (Owen 2005, 2007) – are unique to design as opposed to the discipline of science, for example, which favours accuracy as the core criterion. Likewise, owing to the potential of arriving at different interpretations of data that inform a substantive theory, this study also demonstrates how a study's methodological integrity benefits from being assessed for its appropriateness instead of correctness or accuracy.

Since design activism is about creating “counter-narratives” (Fuad-Luke) or “ultimate particulars”, defined by Nelson and Stolterman (2003:33) as “an action taken by an individual at a specific time and place”, the outcome of a design can be compared to the definition of the word “substantive” in the way that it is used to categorise one type of grounded theory. For this and the reasons mentioned above, it can be inferred that both design and grounded theory are not akin to science where the goal is primarily on understanding by means of finding an absolute ‘truth’; however, this does not suggest that design research is illogical or inconsistent in its search for knowledge. In contrast, the form giver (the researcher/designer) helps to advance knowledge and create new meaning in the world.

Overall, the methodological contribution of the study is inextricably linked to the research methods employed for design research as well as research for design practice. To this end, the study also highlights the potential of design interventions as a form of inquiry, supporting Halse and Boffi’s (2016:2233) view of design interventions “as a supplement to existing research methods”. They “propose that design interventions can be seen as a form of inquiry that is particularly relevant for investigating phenomenon that are not very coherent, barely possible, almost unthinkable, and consistently underspecified because they are in the process of being conceptually and physically articulated” (Halse & Boffi 2016:2227-2233).

Furthermore, the research revealed the use of contextually appropriate methods such as storytelling, which speaks to the potential and inherent value of recognising and embracing indigenous knowledge³⁷ when generating data for a substantive theory. Bridging design research methods and grounded theory methods has also suggested an innovative way to present grounded theory research findings. For example, the use of design methods such as framing, personas and user journeys provides new ways of seeing theory grounded in empirical data. With regard to framing, the enablers and barriers for framing (Paton & Dorst 2011) are relevant and applicable to a grounded theory study because conjectures need to be made and analogies and metaphors are used to analyse the context of the phenomenon and to describe the core concepts and categories that emerge from the data. In turn, the use of both personas and user journeys serves as additional communication methods for readers.

³⁷ The term ‘indigenous knowledge’ as used here denotes the production and dissemination of local knowledge, which does not necessarily rely on so-called Western constructs of theory. Indigenous knowledge may be understood as traditional or vernacular knowledge and is especially useful in a country such as South Africa, owing to the diversity of the belief systems, cultures, traditions and so forth of its citizens.

It is anticipated that the theoretical insights may also facilitate a better understanding of the context in which designers and other city actors operate, thereby affording the study a pragmatic design contribution by way of best/appropriate practice, especially when designers and other city actors take on the task of addressing future socio-political needs of citizens. For discursive purposes, constructivist grounded theory may ultimately spur design research to arrive at substantial and significant theoretical foundations for emerging as well as evolving design disciplines in order to keep contemporary design discourse relevant and meaningful. This need is ultimately motivated by the changing nature of design that oscillates between design as a function and design as a culture, as highlighted in Chapter Five.

6.6 Conclusion and recommendations for further research

The substantive theory that resulted from this study presents the core categories of the phenomenon of design citizenship, each offering an interpretation and analysis of the key city actors and the related social processes that they engage in for the phenomenon to take shape. The theory, which was presented using a storyline strategy for purposes of theoretical integration, offers a rich description and analysis of the civic consequences for those who participated in the design interventions selected for this study. Essentially, the narrative reveals that design citizenship is a heterogeneous field of study, with widespread theoretical and practical implications for both design and citizenship. To this end, readers can determine the relevance of the theoretical framework of design citizenship offered in this study and tailor its application towards social change and more significantly, social justice.

While the current research findings served as the building blocks to build the theory by interpreting the grounded data, going forward it should be reiterated that a “[g]rounded theory is, and will continue to be, a work in progress” (Birks & Mills 2015:35). As such, the theoretical framework of design citizenship needs to be used as a point of departure for further research that may account for different positions of the phenomenon, in other South African cities and amongst a broader network of city actors. Since a grounded theory is contingent on context, further research can be conducted to look more extensively at the phenomenon, beyond the two cities and at a national scale. Owing to design citizenship being complex in both its forms – individual and collective – understanding these forms in more detail across different socio-political and geographic locations will result from additional research.

To sustain this line of inquiry from a design vantage point, the notion of “infrastructuring” (Björgvinsson, Ehn & Hillgren 2012), within participatory design discourse, is relevant to the ongoing search for knowledge about design citizenship in order for the knowledge to inform current and subsequent socio-material assemblies towards social justice ends, specifically in urban contexts. The civic infrastructure and support that can be created through design interventions would also benefit from research that interrogates single parts of the phenomenon; this micro-level investigation may facilitate a more in-depth understanding of the enablers and barriers of design citizenship that emerged during this study. Moreover, since the idea of ongoing “infrastructuring” is explained by Björgvinsson et al. (2012:102) as “design after design”, it is a dynamic, emergent process that needs to continue alongside the city and its people, who continue to grow and develop. Technological advancements also impact on the creative evolution of cities, particularly the contemporary notion of smart cities, so further research on design citizenship can also extend to a concentrated exploration of visual technologies that are used as city-making tools for civic ends.

With regard to citizenship, debates and conversations concerning critical citizenship are often abstract. However, as this study reveals, when design enters the citizenship arena, it provides citizens with new tools to address their civic concerns in more directed ways. Unlike traditional citizenship, the conceptualisation of design citizenship has shown how it opens up the barrier between inclusive and exclusive design and civic practices, by negotiating a new reality or mental mode through abductive ways of thinking; hence, bringing together social, cultural and political considerations in previously unexplored and creative ways. As such, more directed research about design citizenship from a critical citizenship vantage point may assist in more appropriate decision-making by governments and other institutions, specifically for civic education purposes.

In conclusion, this study leaves readers to anticipate how design citizenship would be put into more carefully considered practice since it has challenged the adage that “good design is good citizenship”. This resonates with Koskinen’s (2016:27) sentiment that the notion of “good design” is steeped in historical precedents driven by values and criteria related to industrialisation. As such, this study presents a springboard to encourage the exploration and establishment of new definitions and criteria for design, specifically to advance more meaningful citizenship through design and by design.

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APPENDIX 1: Example of a recruitment e-mail to a research participant

Invitation to participate in a PhD research study

Fatima Cassim <designcitizenship@gmail.com>
To: didi@capetownpartnership.co.za

Thu, Apr 9, 2015 at 4:41 PM

Dear Didintle

I've been in contact with your colleague, Mike Purdham, with regard to my PhD research and he suggested that I contact you.

Just for some background, I currently head the Information Design division at the University of Pretoria's Visual Arts Department and I am a PhD candidate at the same institution. My primary supervisor is Prof Mugendi M'Rithaa; he is affiliated with the Cape Peninsula University of Technology and he is based in the Faculty of Informatics and Design. It is likely that you may know him.

My research interest is on design activism and design citizenship within a South African context. More specifically, my research is designed to explore the notion of design citizenship by examining citizens' involvement with design interventions that address a social issue faced by a particular South African community. The research forms part of my PhD and is being conducted to find out more about design activism and specifically design citizenship since it is an area in design that has not been studied in much detail previously. Ultimately, the aim of the research is to employ a grounded theory approach to explore a way towards generating a theory about design citizenship.

I have identified the Cape Town Partnership as a non-profit organisation whose work aligns with my research undertaking. More specifically, this viewpoint is informed by the numerous design interventions, such as City Walk and Creative Week, that have been facilitated by the organisation. As such, I would like to invite you to be a research participant. If you were to accept the invitation, the engagement will take the form of an interview. I have attached a copy of the letter of informed consent for you which provides additional information about the research and intended engagement.

Once you have been through the information, kindly let me know at your earliest convenience whether you would be willing and available to participate. I will be in Cape Town from 13-26 April, so if your response is positive, can we please confirm a meeting time over the said dates? I would need approximately an hour of your time and we can either meet at Cape Town Partnership or at another location that is convenient for you and suitable to conduct an interview. I understand that owing to the launch of City Walk next week, things at the office are crazy but I would be so grateful if you can accommodate my request while I am in Cape Town. Just a head's up that I am meeting Mike on Thursday, 23 April at 10am and Bulelwa on Friday, 24 April at 11am.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require additional information.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to your response.

Best,
Fatima

--

Fatima Cassim
Division Head: Information Design
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Letter of informed consent for PhD research_F Cassim.pdf
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APPENDIX 2: Letter of informed consent



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Visual Arts

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Participant,

Re: Invitation to participate in a research project

I am inviting you to participate in a qualitative research study, titled ***From empowerment to emancipation: an exploration of design citizenship through design activism in South Africa***. The details of the research are provided below. However, if you would like additional information about the research, kindly contact me. You may also contact my supervisors.

Researcher:

Fatima Cassim (Doctoral candidate, Information Design)
Department of Visual Arts, University of Pretoria, South Africa
Cell: +27 (0)72 238 7161
Mail: designcitizenship@gmail.com

Supervisors:

Professor Jeanne van Eeden
University of Pretoria
Tel: +27 (0)12 420 2353
Mail: jeanne.vaneeden@up.ac.za

Professor Mugendi M'Rithaa
Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)
Tel: +27 (0)21 469 1027
Mail: MugendiM@cput.ac.za

Background and purpose of the study:

This study is designed to explore the notion of design citizenship by examining citizens' involvement with design interventions that address a social issue faced by a particular South African community. The research forms part of my PhD study and is being conducted to find out more about design activism and specifically design citizenship since it is an area in design that has not been studied in much detail previously. Ultimately, the aim of the research is to explore a way towards generating a theory about design citizenship.

Explanation of procedures:

Participation in the study will involve a face-to-face interview that comprises questions relating to your involvement and experience with a design intervention. The interview will be conducted by me, recorded and consequently transcribed in order to analyse the data. The interview will be conducted at a time that is suitable for all parties involved. The aimed completion date of the data collection is by November 2015.

Participants involved in the study:

The participants who will be consulted for purposes of the study will include both the facilitators as well as participants/observers of design interventions. As mentioned above, as a participant, you will be engaged primarily by means of interviews.

Visual Arts Building
University of Pretoria
PRETORIA 0002
Republic of South Africa

Tel: 012 420 5188
Fax: 012 420 3686

fatima.cassim@up.ac.za
www.up.ac.za

Benefits of the study:

The anticipated benefit of participation for you as a participant is the opportunity to discuss feelings, perceptions, and concerns related to the experience of/with design interventions, with a view to have your voice heard on the topic. From my perspective as the researcher, the PhD thesis aims to contribute to current academic research on the topic by distributing new knowledge. Another benefit of my research may be to encourage more widespread dialogue about design citizenship and in so doing encourage and mobilise citizens to use design to address matters of social concern.

Risks involved in the study:

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts anticipated from your participation in this study. However, should you feel that there are any questions during the interview that may pose a risk, you may decline to answer any or all questions.

Participants' rights:

Participation in this study is on a voluntary basis. Therefore, you are free to withdraw consent and terminate your involvement at any time should you choose to.

Confidentiality:

Information gained from this study will be stored securely at the University of Pretoria for a period of fifteen years from the time of publication of the PhD thesis. Your name and any other identifying details will not be published in this study without your permission and you can be assured of confidentiality and privacy in this regard. Nonetheless, the coded results of the research may be published because the dissemination of the knowledge obtained from this study may be of great value in guiding designers and other citizens when designing and implementing future design interventions.

CONSENT

I, _____, have read and I understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without any implications. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

My name and other identifying details may be included in the study . ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signed at: _____ on this date: _____ .

Signature of participant: _____ Signature of researcher: _____

If:

(a) you would like a copy of your interview transcript once it is available

(b) you are interested in information about the research findings

and/or

(c) if you would be willing to be contacted again in the future for a possible follow-up interview, please provide your contact information below:

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Tick those that apply:

☐ I would like a copy of my interview transcript

☐ I would like information about the research findings

☐ I would be willing to be contacted in the future for a possible follow-up interview

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APPENDIX 3: Sample frame of research participants

SAMPLE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

KEY – Gender: Male (M); Female (F) | Race: Black (B); White (W); Coloured (C)

NAME/S OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT	DATE OF INTERVIEW	PLACE OF INTERVIEW
Sune Stassen (F)(W)	14-Apr-15	Cape Town
Bruce Snaddon (M)(W)	16-Apr-15	Cape Town
Rael Futerman (M)(W)	17-Apr-15	Cape Town
Dustin Kramer (M)(W)	20-Apr-15	Cape Town (Khayelitsha)
Didintle Ntsie (F)(B)	20-Apr-15	Cape Town
Andrew Putter (M)(W)	21-Apr-15	Cape Town
Kirsten Wilkins (F)(W)	22-Apr-15	Cape Town
Michael Purdham (M)(W)	23-Apr-15	Cape Town
Bulelwa Ngewona (F)(B)	24-Apr-15	Cape Town
Richard Perez (M)(W)	11-May-15	Cape Town
Alexia Webster (F)(W)	13-May-15	Cape Town
Kenan Petersen (M)(C)	13-May-15	Cape Town
Danielle Ehrlich (F)(W)	14-May-15	Cape Town
Xoliswa Welokazi (F)(B)	14 - May - 15	Cape Town (Khayelitsha)
Malwande Msongelwa (F)(B)	16 - May - 15	Cape Town
Zukiswa Qezo (F)(B)	21 - May - 15	Cape Town (Skype)
Khanyiswa Gxotani (F)(B)	14-May-15	Cape Town (Khayelitsha)
City Walk participant 1 - Thabo (M)(B)	01 - Jul - 15	Pretoria
City Walk participant 2 - Mac (M)(C)	02 - Jul - 15	Pretoria (Skype)
City Walk participant 3 - Lunwabo (M)(B)	12 - Jul - 15	Pretoria (Skype)
City Walk participant 4 - Ukhona (F)(B)	13 - Jul - 15	Pretoria (Skype)
City Walk participant 5 – Odwa Mnyama (F)(B)	19 - Aug - 15	Cape Town
City Walk participant 6 (M)(C)	16-May-15	Cape Town
Marc Steinlin (M)(W)	21-May-15	Cape Town (Skype)
Marcela Guerrero Casas (F)(W)	30-Jun-15	Bogota (Skype)
Cindy van Heerden (F)(W)	01-Jul-15	Pretoria
Tjaart Pretorius (M)(W)	02-Jul-15	Pretoria (Skype)
Dalli Weyers (M)(W)	03-Jul-15	Cape Town (Skype)
George Asamoah-Awuah (M)(B)	12-Jul-15	Pretoria (Skype)
Tshepang Mabusela (F)(B)	13-Jul-15	Pretoria (Skype)
Rike Sitas (F)(W)	19-Aug-15	Cape Town

Feast of the Clowns participant 1 – Mpho (F)(B)		
Feast of the Clowns participant 2 (F)(B)		
Feast of the Clowns participant 3 (F)(B)	15-Aug-15	Pretoria
Maker Faire participant 1 (F)(C)		
Maker Faire participant 2 (F)(B)		
Maker Faire participant 3 (F)(B)		
Maker Faire participant 4 (F)(B)	22-Aug-15	Cape Town
Lize Nel (F)(W)	23-Sep-16	Pretoria
Andries Oberholzer (M)(W)	27-Sep-16	Pretoria
Masana Chikeka (F)(W)	30-Sep-16	Pretoria
Dave Bryant (M)(W)	11-Oct-16	Cape Town
Daniel Sullivan (M)(W)	27-Oct-16	Cape Town (Skype)
Fhelani Neshehe (M)(B)	03-Oct-16	Pretoria (e-mail)

APPENDIX 4: Example of a case-based memo

MEMO WRITTEN AFTER INTERVIEWING A COMMUNICATION DESIGNER

This interview resonated quite closely with my interview with Suné in that there seems to be a definite link between design activism and civic engagement, although to varying degrees and it's not without its challenges. Bruce acknowledges that “people are obviously finding that it is quite hard work”. In particular, there was a strong call by him to educate people and create awareness amongst citizens about design, the role of designers and by extension, social issues.

Overall, I felt that a strong focus of this interview was on education – both inside and outside the classroom. Like Suné, the focus on education could possibly be owing to Bruce's affiliation with an academic institution. What I kept hearing throughout the interview is that Bruce is actively involved as a communication designer from an educator's perspective. This implied that he did not separate his professional role when in a community setting. He also equated the role of the designer to that of a facilitator and alluded to them being harvesters of the “good things”.

Bruce highlighted the need to bring people out of ‘hiding’ and at the same time giving them a platform to express their feelings about social issues. There was a significant focus on creating a platform for action and specific reference was made to the role that designers play in creating spaces that are conducive to dialogue and action.

It seems that professional designers/educators work across different platforms. Bruce for example has been directly and indirectly involved with a number of different interventions. What are the reasons for this cross-pollination? How much of the collaboration is cross-disciplinary? Are the networks cooperative or is it the personality of the individual designer participant? Would the same apply to non-professional participants?

Another pertinent question that this interview brought to the fore is whether design activism makes tacit knowledge visible in design students, and by extension, citizens at large. This is especially in light of his comment that “design activism is about trying to tap into what we do naturally”.

APPENDIX 5: Example of conceptual/comparative memo

AESTHETIC EXPERIENCES AS ALTERNATE HEALING METHODS?

The idea of an aesthetic experiences (through design interventions) as an alternative healing method (to alleviate conflict and release tension) could be explored from the data that is emerging? Especially owing to the fractured past many South Africans are still grappling with.

The metaphor of “massaging conversations” resurfaces here where the act of a design massage serves as a stimulant and probe for engagement through numerous design methods. Design methods – both pre-intervention and during the intervention. For example, design research when the intervention is still in the conceptualisation and planning phase; owing to the contextual nature of design interventions, research is conducted to have local site knowledge as well as knowledge about the audience.

The design methods need to be the focus of the designers’ contributions and not the designer. Here, anonymity has a greater benefit since it does not impose a hierarchy on the participants; the designers should ideally serve as guides to nurture design citizenship and should not be prescriptive (essentially, they should target and work on the pressure points).

Also nurturing critical thinking in citizens in terms of aesthetics; becoming mindful of good design. Can good design be good citizenship? What is good design?

Like a massage, the effects of design interventions seem to be therapeutic. There are numerous, tangible benefits/effects that have been noted thus far. These relate to “looking for personal development” and include:

- o recognising one’s voice
- o having an increased sense of agency (Bruce: designer as an athlete at a starting point of a race; Tjaart on recognising his own sense of agency in a public space noted: “I was in full force”)
- o nurturing abductive thinking skills (being guided by intuition and one’s gut feeling in a space)
- o feeling confident to participate
- o developing creative problem-solving skills

These aims and/or effects seem to be individual and/or collective. On a personal level, citizens are looking for personal development. They have opportunities to learn from their mistakes and thereby learn to embrace flexibility. Collectively, these tools help to build trust. Building trust operates on multiple levels: in each other, in design, in government. The communal focus can be further extended to a professional and then a community level.