The everyday life and the missing: silences, heroic narratives and exhumations.

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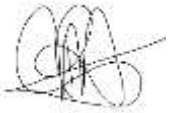
PLAGIARISM DECLARATION:

I, Rosalia Mendes, declare that all work presented by me for every aspect of my mini-thesis will be my own and where I have made use of another's work, I understand what plagiarism is and all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.



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Abstract:

This mini-thesis draws on the biographical materials of activists; Zubeida Jaffer, Nokuthula Simelane and Siphiwo Mthimkulu in order to investigate their representation as South African Anti-Apartheid activists. Within Post-Apartheid South Africa there seems to be a strong tendency to focus on the spectacular violence that occurred between the National Party government and Apartheid activists. This almost singular focus has led to an overwhelming promotion of the heroic narrative and as a result the structural violence of daily life under apartheid has been side-lined. This mini-thesis argues that the representations of activists who are still living and those who were considered as Apartheid-era disappearances should not be produced as singularly political heroes of the state but be represented and accounted for with their full personhood. As such this study focuses on the way that the everyday manifests itself within the heroic life and in turn, how it can be articulated through the narratives of activists like Jaffer, Simelane and Mthimkulu.

This mini-thesis identifies the connection between the everyday life and the heroic life through the process of rehumanisation of activists that have been dehumanised through harassment, detention, torture, and in the cases of Simelane and Mthimkulu, dehumanised in their death. The notion of missing is also necessary in this research and allows an understanding of missing as more than just a physical absence but seeks to challenge the conventional ways in which missing can be understood by acknowledging the way that it occurs within the lives of activists. The lives and afterlives of the three activists that I have mentioned will allow me to question what missing means, what does it do for those left behind, and what does it mean in relation to the everyday and the heroic life? Indeed, it will allow me to ask the question that this mini-thesis is based on; How might the concept of the everyday enable a history of apartheid era missing persons while simultaneously enabling them to escape the binds of the heroic narrative?

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Introduction:

This mini-thesis focuses primarily on the life of Zubeida Jaffer and the after-lives of Nokuthula Simelane and Siphiwo Mthimkulu, three South African activists who had fought against the apartheid regime with the latter two having died fighting for freedom from oppression. These three activists have been inscribed into a particular heroic narrative due to their interaction with what the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) terms political violence. However, I suggest that their narratives are significantly more complex and I hope to make this visible by looking at their inscription into the political realm.

This mini-thesis thus argues that there is a need to rehumanise activists that have been dehumanised by their perpetrators and conscripted into a collective masculine based heroic narrative by the South African government. Furthermore, confining an activist's narrative to only the heroic side-lines their everyday and personal narrative, which misses the opportunity to rehumanise them with their full personhood and does not acknowledge their missingness as more than physical absence. As a result, I maintain that the everyday and heroic narrative are not separate and that it is through combining them both that rehumanisation is possible to be performed.

Zubeida Jaffer, an acclaimed journalist, became an activist after being detained by security police for an article she wrote in 1980 on police brutality in the Cape Flats. Her experiences with and resistance to Apartheid is outlined in her memoir, *Our Generation,* which interrupts the mostly male dominant political sphere in the South African liberation movement history.[1] The security police believed Jaffer to be politically active and tortured

[1] *Knocking on: Mothers and daughters in struggle in South Africa*. (eds.) Shirley Gunn and Sinazo Krwala. Published by the Human Rights Media Centre (HMRC) Cape Town in collaboration with Centre for the study of Violence and Reconciliation Johannesburg (CSVR) 2008. p. 264; Ruth First, *117 Days: An Account of Confinement and Interrogation Under the South African 90-Day Detention Law.* (Johannesburg: Penguin Books, 2009); Zubeida Jaffer, *Love in the Time of Treason: The Life Story of Ayesha Dawood* (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2008); Janet Levine, *Inside Apartheid: One Woman's Struggle in South Africa*. (Open Road Media, 2015).

her for information that she did not have to the point that she said anything to them that she thought might be of use.[2] As a result of this detention and all of the political violence that was going on at the time, Jaffer started to actively engage in politics, she became involved with the trade union movements and the establishment of the United Democratic Freedom party (UDF). Jaffer's narrative was largely political but she did not focus on her political activism, rather she focused on her personal narrative and as a result, the reader was able to see how the heroic narrative became visible in the everyday. It is possible to see her narrative - as she does - as standing for more than just herself and possibly affirming women's political legacy.[3]

Initially, this mini-thesis was going to focus solely on the life of Zubeida Jaffer and how she was able to incorporate the everyday life with her journey through political upheavals. Jaffer engaged with gender, violence, heroic narratives and as I make visible in chapter one, missingness that is not limited to a physical absence. However, she was one of the activists that the TRC engaged with and her narrative is far from overlooked. Through her memoir and various interviews, Jaffer advocated the everyday narrative by integrating her personhood and everyday life into her auto/biography which made me consider why the heroic was seen as separate and distinct. I started to ask about the everyday of the families and friends who were left behind by activists that had died fighting the struggle. I began asking why some names were familiar, why some names were put into the newspaper or evening news, why some families got a state-funded funeral service for their loved ones and others did not. Of course, sometimes there were complex reasons behind some of these questions such as not finding the remains of activists or perpetrators not co-operating with the Missing Persons Task Team (MPTT) to give a location of the remains.

[2] Zubeida Jaffer, *Our Generation*, (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2003), p. 28.
[3] Jaffer, *Our Generation*. p. 127. See also Rozena Maart, *Rosa's District 6,* (Cape Town: New Africa Books, 2006); Pregs Govender, *Love and Courage: A story of Insubordination.* (Johannesburg: Jacana, 2007); *Knocking on,* Gunn and Krwala; First, *117 Days;* Levine, *Inside Apartheid*; Jaffer, *Love in the Time of Treason.*

A link became visible between memorialisation practices of exhumation, repatriation, and reburial in South Africa for activists, and the political climate which seemed to be established around the resistance of political party and current South African government, the African National Congress (ANC), despite the involvement of other political parties in the liberation struggle.

Mike Featherstone asserts that acceptance of the heroic life suggests the rejection of the everyday. He maintains that the heroic life tends to emphasize the gendered role of masculinity and its inscriptibility within "extraordinary life which threatens not only the possibility of returning to the everyday routines but entails the deliberate risking of life itself."[4] This might be true in the South African context of men having to leave for exile or being detained, but there are many women who have traversed both the heroic and the everyday such as Nokuthula Simelane, Phila Portia Ndwandwe, Zubeida Jaffer, Mamphela Ramphela and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, to name a few. Through these and other women who were activists, colleagues, neighbours, sisters, daughters, friends and more, we become aware that the heroic life and the everyday life are not as inherently separate as it is represented or imagined by society.

It was after having seen the way that Jaffer explored her life, both the everyday and the heroic, through her memoir, that I wanted to explore the everyday further and see how it might be visible in the lives of other activists. Moreover, I wanted to look at the concept of missingness and consider how it might be seen as more than physically missing but also acknowledge that there is a missingness that families, friends and communities need to deal with after the death or detention and torture of a loved one.[5] I then began to consider the life

[4] Mike Featherstone, "The Heroic Life and Everyday Life", *Theory Culture & Society*, 9, 1 (1992), p.165.
[5] Nicky Rousseau, Ciraj Rassool and Riedwaan Moosage, "Missing and Missed: Subject, Politics, Memorialisation" Kronos: *Southern African Histories*, 44 (2018).

and afterlife of Nokuthula Simelane whose narrative I had previously engaged with and how she too had become inscribed into the heroic narrative despite being a female activist.[6]

Nokuthula Simelane was a 23-year-old student at the University of Swaziland who travelled to Johannesburg, South Africa under the pretence of wanting to buy a dress for her upcoming graduation. She was not only an impending graduate but also an ANC activist whose role was to courier messages and information. The trip to South Africa was a cover for her actual intention which was to meet up with other fellow activists. Unfortunately, the meeting that had been set up was in fact a trap set by Apartheid security police who had infiltrated the ANC. Simelane arrived for her meeting only to be abducted from the parking lot, the scene of her abduction was one of the last times that she was seen alive.

Her compelling narrative is essentially mediated by her family, friends and fellow activists based on their relationship and interactions with her. [7] Unfortunately, Simelane's body was never recovered which is very difficult for her remaining family to bear. Simelane's father had been a key figure in the TRC testimony that explored her disappearance. He has sadly since passed away without knowing what happened to his daughter. The perpetrators who had applied for amnesty relating to her abduction, torture and disappearance did not apply for amnesty relating to her death. Nokuthula Simelane's abduction, torture and disappearance has accordingly granted her access into the heroic narrative. I return to her case study once more for my mini-thesis because of her curated role as a hero by her sister Thembisile Nkadimeng.[8]

Siphiwo Mthimkulu, another activist whose narrative I engage with, was active in the liberation movement struggle from the age of 17 when he joined the South African Students

[6] Rosália Mendes, "Do the deceased have agency or does that agency only occur when used for political ends?" (Unpublished Honours extended essay: University of the Western Cape, 2016).
[7] Mark Kaplan, *Betrayal*, DVD, Johannesburg: SABC, (Grey Matter Media, Film Resource Unit, 2006).
[8] Thembisile Nkadimeng is the ANC mayor of Polokwane; See also, Alfred Moselakgomo, "Mpumalanga to honour activist Simelane", *Sowetan Live* (25 November 2009) https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2009-11-25-mpumalanga-to-honour-activist-simelane/ (Accessed 21 February 2019).

Movement in 1977.[9] Mthimkulu had been considered by the security police as a high-risk activist and two years after joining his first political movement he was detained by the Port Elizabeth security police who he became well acquainted with due to his activism. The Congress of South African Students (COSAS) was formed in 1979 and after being released from detention Mthimkulu joined their Port Elizabeth branch. Mthimkulu's anti-apartheid activism was heavily monitored by the security police and in 1981, after distributing pamphlets for a COSAS event, he became wanted by the police and was included on an arrest list. Mthimkulu went into hiding but was discovered by the police after he had allegedly gone to retrieve a pair of boots from a friend.[10]

Mthimkulu was arrested for the final time and taken into custody where he was detained for months while he was tortured for information. Finally, the security police poisoned him with Thallium and released him so that he would not die in their custody. Unfortunately for them, Joyce Mthimkulu was able to get her son to the hospital in time. Mthimkulu was initially admitted to Livingstone Hospital in Port Elizabeth on the 26th of October 1981, and thereafter transferred to Groote Schuur hospital for additional tests. One year later after surviving being poisoned, the security police kidnapped Siphiwo Mthimkulu and his friend 'Topsy' Madaka. They were taken to a farm in the Eastern Cape called Post Chalmers where they were tortured, drugged and shot. Their bodies were burned and most of the remains were allegedly thrown into the Great Fish River.[11]

[9] Robyn Leslie, "Life and times of a youth activist: the murder of Siphiwo Mthimkhulu" SABC News Online (11 June 2015) http://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/life-and-times-of-a-youth-activist-the-murder-of-siphiwo-mthimkhulu/ (Accessed 21 February 2019); South African History Online (SAHO) "Siphiwo Maxwell "Congress" Mthimkhulu", (13 September 2011) https://www.sahistory.org.za/people/siphiwo-maxwell-congress-mthimkhulu (Accessed 21 February 2019).
[10] Leslie, "Life and times of a youth activist"
[11] SAHO "Siphiwo Maxwell "Congress" Mthimkhulu"; Nicky Rousseau, "Eastern Cape Bloodlines 1: Assembling the Human" in Parallax, 22, 2 (2016); Riedwaan Moosage, "Missing-ness, History and Apartheid-era disappearances: The figuring of Siphiwo Mthimkulu, Tobekile 'Topsy' Madaka and Sizwe Kondile as missing dead persons." (Unpublished PhD thesis: VU Amsterdam and University of the Western Cape, September, 2018).

Joyce Mthimkulu held her son's hair at her TRC testimony decades after his death and after having been blocked from testifying three times. Her application had been blocked by Gideon Nieuwoudt, one of the perpetrators responsible and accountable for his hand in the disappearance and subsequent death and destruction of Siphiwo Mthimkulu's body. The iconic image of Joyce Mthimkulu holding her son's hair with the scalp still attached evokes the materiality and the humanness of Siphiwo Mthimkulu.

The documentary *Between Joyce and Remembrance,* filmed by Mark Kaplan can also be considered as a way to commemorate the life that Siphiwo Mthimkulu lived. *Between Joyce and Remembrance* provides its audience with an insight into the political life of Siphiwo Mthimkulu as well as a reflection on his personal life through a biographical narration by Mthimkulu's family, his fellow activists and friends. At the beginning of the documentary, Kaplan asserts that he, "firmly believes that we must strive to keep certain memories alive and the camera is a way of preventing things from disappearing." [12]

Although there is a lack of scholarly work on both the role of men in the everyday and the role of women in the heroic narrative, Rita Felski, Heidi Grunebaum and Mamphela Ramphele attempt to show both the silences and voices of women through their roles in domesticity and perhaps how this challenges their exclusion from the heroic life. [13] Through their work, it is possible to show the role of men in the everyday and the spaces within the everyday that push forward the agency of the heroic life in relation to gender. Zubeida Jaffer writes about both her heroic life and the everyday narrative which spans a period of ten years and demonstrates a synergy between both of these narratives while also incorporating issues of gender.[14]

[12] Kaplan, *Betrayal*.
[13] Rita Felski, "The Invention of Everyday Life." *New Formations,* 59. (1999); Heidi Grunebaum, *Memorializing the Past: Everyday Life in South Africa after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission*. (New Brunswick U.S.A. and London U.K: Transaction Publishers, 2011). Mamphela, Ramphele. "Political Widowhood in South Africa: The Embodiment of Ambiguity." *Daedalus.* 125, 1 (1996).
[14] Jaffer, *Our Generation*.

Despite gender roles which are changing, there still seems to be a resistance to move away from a notion of home and the everyday as associated with women, while the non-home and heroic are associated with men, despite an everyday which existed within the struggle. This resistance is reiterated by Ramphele's notion of political widowhood whereby only by becoming a widow of a political hero could women be included in the political realm through an induction by their dead husbands.[15] Phila Ndwandwe who was an MK commander serves to remind us of the stark gender divide which is prevalent but which she and other women have been able to transverse as I show in Chapter Two. Furthermore, it is because of narratives like Ndwandwe that I argue women's narratives should not be excluded from the broader national narrative.[16]

The heroic narrative is not only promoted by the current South African government but also by families who would like their loved ones' to be commemorated as seen in the work of Jay Aronson. There seems to be an obligation on the family to facilitate a heroic narrative otherwise their loved one appears to not be counted in the grander national narrative.[17] The heroic narrative is important however as I suggest in this thesis, the personhood of an activist needs to similarly be acknowledged. Following Jenny Edkins, it seems that the capacity of the "person as such" to be acknowledged or remembered is curtailed when overwhelmed by the political agency.[18]

The TRC had been tasked with facilitating reconciliation in the country after apartheid had legally ended. It needed to handle the influx of information and data from people who

[15] Ramphele. "Political Widowhood in South Africa.", p. 99.
[16] Sabine Marschall, "Commemorating 'Struggle Heroes': Constructing a Genealogy for the New South Africa." Routledge *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 12, 2 (2006); Jacklyn Cock, "Women and the Military: Implications for Demilitarization in the 1990s in South Africa." *Gender and Society*, 8, 2 (1994); Sofia Axelsson, "Gendered Struggle for Freedom: A Narrative Inquiry into Female Ex-Combatants in South Africa." In Seema Shekhawat *Female Combatants in Conflict and Peace: Challenging Gender in Violence and Post-Conflict Reintegration.* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2015).
[17] J. D. Aronson, "The Strengths and Limitations of South Africa's Search for Apartheid-Era Missing Persons" in *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, 5, 2 (2011).
[18] Jenny Edkins, *Missing: Persons and Politics* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2011), p. viii.

were looking for loved ones that went missing, who wanted to share their experiences and narratives or share the experiences and narratives of family members who were killed by security police. Due to a large number of individuals that came forward either for themselves or for a loved one the TRC needed to demarcate political violence from non-political violence.[19]

Aronson points out that families, mainly women, of the disappeared in South Africa were instrumental in searching for information regarding their loved ones, and fought for their recognition in the heroic narrative. [20] This may be, as Ciraj Rassool argues, "because the heroic dead of the liberation struggle are memorialised in South Africa as the nation's dead."[21] Although they do not speak specifically about South Africa, the work of Edkins and Katherine Verdery relates heavily to the agency of missing persons.[22] They question who the body belongs to after death, whose inscription has the most authority and what the effects are of being missing. It is then possible to theorize that people become missing from the familial inscription and are co-opted into the heroic narrative. Of course, this was not always the case as many families wanted the heroic narrative whether it was true or not, whether it was deserved or not and whether it was plausible in terms of budgets and funding.[23] These strains of thought come through in the work of Jacob Dlamini's book, *Askari*, and a podcast featuring Madeleine Fullard (the head of the MPTT) in which they explain that many were

[19] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report, Volume 1 (Cape Town: Juta, 1998), p. 29 Hereafter TRC Report Vol. 1.
[20] Aronson, "The Strengths and Limitations"; J. D. Aronson, "Humanitarian DNA Identification in Post-Apartheid South Africa," in Keith Wailoo, Alondra Nelson, and Catherine Lee (eds.) *Genetics and the Unsettled Past: The Collision of DNA, Race, and History*, (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010).
[21] Ciraj Rassool, "Human Remains, the Disciplines of the Dead and the South African Memorial Complex" in Derek R. Peterson, Kodzo Gavua, and Ciraj Rassool (eds.) *The Politics of Heritage in Africa: Economies, Histories, and Infrastructures* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p.134.
[22] Edkins, *Missing*; Katherine Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).
[23] Aronson, "The Strengths and Limitations"; Nicky Rousseau, "Identification, Politics, Disciplines: Missing Persons and Colonial Skeletons in South Africa" in E. Anstett and J.M Dreyfus (eds.), *Human Remains and Identification: Mass violence, genocide, and the 'forensic turn'* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015).

co-opted into the heroic narrative despite being Apartheid collaborators.[24] These records of 'traitors' are hardly available to the public because of the implications it has on the family of the activist who are seen to have raised a 'traitor'.

Fiona Ross describes how four women that she had worked with in her research did not speak about the systematic violence that they endured under apartheid directly. However, through examining their testimonies at the TRC, the notions of time, domesticity, gender, violence and self, become weaved into the personal narratives of these women. [25] Through these narratives, it is possible to deduce experiences of violence in the everyday. Many theories propose to explore rather than define the "world" of the everyday; how it operates as opposed to how it is defined. As Rita Felski articulates, "the everyday life seems to be everywhere, yet nowhere" and its ability to interlace with everything makes it difficult to identify.[26] Felski is similarly interested in the heroic life and explores questions of gender in relation to violence and the everyday. She analyses the way in which the domain of the everyday is generally represented by women, and men are generally represented in the heroic.

Felski points to the constant interaction between "home and non-home," which is not shut off from the influence of society but is rather shaped by its influence.[27] Looking at Felski's notion of boundaries, which are "leaky", the home can thus become infiltrated by violence while maintaining a semblance of "ordinary everyday situations".[28] We may also recognise that the government and public reconfigured the 'normal' under the oppression of Apartheid in relation to violence, both structural and spectacular. Thus, for instance, it is not

[24] Jacob Dlamini, *Askari: A Story of Collaboration and Betrayal in the Anti-Apartheid Struggle* (Johannesburg: Jacana Media, 2014); Madeleine Fullard, "Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons - Podcast." (10 May 2017). https://omny.fm/shows/mid-morning-show-702/digging-up-the-truth-about-missing-persons, (Accessed 12 October 2019).
[25] Fiona Ross, "Speech and Silence: Women's Testimonies during the First Five Weeks of the Public Hearings at South Africa's TRC" in Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Margaret Lock, Mamphela Ramphele and Pamela Reynolds (eds.) *Remaking a World: Violence, Social Suffering, and Recovery*, (Berkeley & London: University of California Press, 2001).
[26] Felski, "The Invention" p. 15.
[27] Felski, "The Invention" p. 24.
[28] Felski, "The Invention" p. 24.

always leaving home for exile that inducted activists into a heroic life that was separate and untouched; under Apartheid the violence never fully left with those leaving for exile. Families of activists who stayed behind remained victims of the "horror of day-to-day life", which often included ongoing surveillance and intrusion owing to their relationship with those in exile.[29]

Dealing with activists, political parties and communities of oppressed societies in South Africa during Apartheid was a process of dehumanisation that was built into the law of the country. It was a system that ostracised and othered a community based on the colour of their skin and became visible both in the everyday and the heroic. The violence of police surveillance on homes is articulated by Jaffer, while Dlamini writes of police escorting men to and from their hostels, checking their *dompas* (pass book), and security police disappearing activists and then returning to find out information about the very persons they disappeared.[30] It is in and through the everyday that we start to see the effects and affects of state surveillance and zones of hyper-surveillance in which people reconfigured their lives, in turn normalizing the violence that was imposed on them under the law of apartheid as "everyday life". The administrative and routine modes of dealing with and controlling the black population, penetrated all aspects of life (transport, education, work, home, recreation, even birth and death).

Of course, the greater majority of activists were severely tortured in detention and many security police had their own way of extracting information. The most infamous method called the "wet bag" was demonstrated by security policeman Jeffrey Benzien during

[29] Joyce Mthimkulu recounts in her TRC testimony how the security police would regularly come to her house and demand to know the whereabouts of her son. Joyce Mthimkulu, TRC Hearing; Zubeida Jaffer mentions that her mother used to set the alarm off in her house when the police came to raid in the middle of the night as a protection because people would come out to see what was going on. p. 31-32.
[30] Jaffer, *Our Generation*; Dlamini, *Askari*.

his TRC hearing.[31] Poison, physical violence, isolation and other such tactics were used to dehumanise activists in an attempt to force them to confess any intelligence that they knew. Dehumanisation was used as a tactic by security police to break an activist but it was also a form of perception in which security police would not see their victims as human. The security police would distinguish themselves clearly from the activists that they tortured as a form of justification for their actions. I argue that this is a continuous form of dehumanisation that can reinforce and maintain this othering.

However, it is the reversal of this process that I am particularly interested in. The rehumanisation of an activist is what I believe to be a key approach in linking the everyday and the heroic. As I argue, rehumanisation has the ability to reinstate the agency of an individual as a human and as a person through the various forms it may take as I elaborate in Chapter Three of this mini-thesis. Indeed, in the process of rehumanisation as it relates to the history of the liberation struggle, I argue that there is a means to incorporate a wider biography of the activist that includes the heroic and the everyday without idolizing and perpetuating a masculine based ideal hero that displaces the personhood of the individual. I intend to problematize rehumanisation and its processes in what follows and make visible how rehumanisation is a complex and multi-layered process that can be and should be performed in various ways as needed by the activists and their families and communities. It is important to ask how and why one intends to rehumanise an individual that has been dehumanised and what is the significance of rehumanisation? Of course in the case of individuals such as Zubeida Jaffer and Thandi Shezi whose narrative I elaborate on in chapter three, they have to deal with the rehumanisation process themselves.

I demonstrate in this mini-thesis that the everyday is not a separate entity juxtaposed

[31] Max Du Preez, Special Report on Truth and Reconciliation, TRC Episode 71, Part 01. SABC (15 June 2011) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2VVOvXQWeDA (Accessed 27 January 2020).

with the heroic life through the narratives of Zubeida Jaffer, Nokuthula Simelane, and Siphiwo Mthimkulu; rather it infiltrates the heroic, which itself is grounded in the ordinary and mundane. Furthermore, the biography of an activist needs to be expanded to allow for a fuller and more inclusive narrative that incorporates both the political and the personal aspects. One way I will explore as a possibility to expand an activist's narrative is through the process of rehumanisation which is similarly available to activists who were killed or those who are still alive and living with the effects of their torture.

Overall then, this mini-thesis argues that there is a need to re-humanise the narrative of activists who have been dehumanised by their perpetrators, who have been appropriated by the government into constructing the grander national heroic narrative, and who have been confined within the masculine heroic standard. Moreover, this mini-thesis argues that the heroic narrative is not separate from the everyday and by focusing solely on their political status, the 'person as such' is missed in the everyday. I, therefore, maintain that the heroic narrative does not consider an activist's personhood nor does it consider a missingness that is not limited to a physical absence.

Chapter Outline:

Chapter One introduces the concept of the everyday and delves into the complex and integrated layers within the everyday so as to highlight its ambiguity and indicate the ways that the everyday is more than just a space where the home and mundane exist. This chapter introduces the life lived by Zubeida Jaffer through the various biographical materials that she represents herself and her daily lived life. The main aspect of Jaffer's biography is produced in her memoir, *Our Generation* a self-representation which I believe draws on her TRC hearing, one of the first retellings of her narrative. In Chapter One, I suggest that the everyday and the heroic are not gendered spaces where women and men live respectively, nor are they antithetical to one another but that they are complex and integrated. The everyday encompasses the space where multiple narratives may co-exist. In this chapter, using the narrative of Jaffer's life, her journey and the various identities that she portrays, I propose that the personhood of an activist should be included rather than side-lined for a narrative that is produced to only celebrate their political achievements. I engage with aspects such as gender, identity, missingness and personhood as it is made visible in the life of Zubeida Jaffer through her memoir, TRC hearing, website, interviews and 21 Icons documentary.

Chapter Two provides an analysis on the heroic life by expanding on the lives and afterlives of apartheid-era missing persons, Nokuthula Simelane and Siphiwo Mthimkulu, which is informed by the political discourse of nationalism, violence, gender and the everyday. This chapter expands on the reproduction and representation of activists who are conscripted by the state so that they might be attached with a political biography. I explore the various biographical materials of Simelane and Mthimkulu such as the TRC hearing which delves into their political activism, their documentaries, both of which are filmed by Mark Kaplan, and the various media reports. Chapter Two also draws on the podcast *Digging*

up the truth about missing persons[1] narrated by head of the MPTT - Madeleine Fullard and talkshow host Eusebius Mckaiser as they interpret the heroic narrative and the surrounding politics of what it means to be understood as a hero in South Africa.

I engage with the deep-seated issues of superimposing a gendered heroic narrative on a body that is recovered and reclaimed, subsequently missing the personhood of an activist. This argument is based on the work of Madeleine Fullard who narrates how sometimes activists were not killed in a heroic fashion but that part of the narrative is unwanted. These deep seated issues of gender are visible in the narratives of female activists such as Thandi Shezi and Nokuthula Simelane and others who were able to withstand torture without breaking and were seen to live up to male standards of heroism. I argue that the physical and psychological aspects of reclaiming a body through the MPTT's process, which includes the family, is problematised when they are not then inscribed with their full personhood. In this chapter I suggest that activists who are identified as politically heroic figures should be embodied by their full personhood and political identity instead of only being symbolised as heroic figures that the foundation that the country will be built upon.

Chapter Three examines the processes of rehumanisation as it relates to the biography of an activist and attempts to link both the everyday and the heroic narratives. I argue that the process of rehumanisation is the method by which activists may be reclaimed as human and are no longer restricted to a singular identity or narrative that does not render them any less missing. In this last chapter, I make visible the effects of missingness and dehumanisation as they ripple across the lives of activists and their families so that it becomes part of their everyday. The act of dehumanization cannot be excluded from the everyday and only seen as within the political realm as the very consequences are visible in the everyday. As a result, chapter three expands on the various and indeed complex processes in which an activist can

[1] McKaiser with Fullard "Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons" – Podcast.

be rehumanised as needed by the families, friends, community and most importantly the activists themselves through their agency. Thus, by looking at the lives of all three activists, Jaffer, Simelane and Mthimkulu and the ways in which their personhood is made visible alongside their heroic narrative, I argue that rehumanisation occurs both within the everyday and the heroic so that it may expand on the fuller biography of the activist.

Chapter One: Questioning the everyday

Locating the everyday: the balance between ordinary and spectacular.

Our Generation was not one of the books that I was looking for when I went into a second hand shop, but standing there in and amongst classical literature, it appeared to be interesting. I turned it over to read the back cover, and the reviews by Albie Sachs and Antjie Krog further sparked my interest. The reviews mentioned the TRC and Apartheid which piqued my curiosity because it had links to my field of study at the time. It could have been the price coupled together with its interesting links or it could have possibly been the names of Albie Sachs and Antjie Krog that were mentioned, but I decided that I may as well buy it and see if I might need it at a later stage. A few months later I went home and looked at the few South African books that had for some reason intrigued me. I picked up *Our Generation* for the first time since I had shelved it and turned it over to reread the back of the book. I realised from reading the line, "a refreshing and insightful version of the struggle against apartheid, told from the perspective of a young mother"[1] that this book, which I bought merely on a whim, might be momentous.

So how does *Our Generation*, in addition to various biographical material on this activist, become so important and focal to my research? Zubeida Jaffer's narrative was compelling and thought-provoking in the way that she depicted a self - representation in both the heroic and the everyday life. She presented herself in her home, her work, places of activism, prison and in all the corresponding identities to match such as wife, mother, daughter, activist, friend, colleague and more. Her work included aspects of the heroic narrative such as being threatened with rape and a forced miscarriage while in detention but she did not shy away from the emotional and physical scars that she had to deal with afterwards. Jaffer represented her narrative in a personal way that showed both the day-to-day

[1] Jaffer, *Our Generation*.

and the heroic struggles she faced while still including the continuing emotional effects on her mental health.

Ultimately it was the way that she was able to represent her day to day life that fascinated me. Jaffer depicted her journey over 15 years, condensing much of her life into meaningful events and moments, but still managing to make these quotidian memories and personal experiences the focus of her narrative. Her memoir was able to captivate and inscribe the political aspects as an essential but secondary theme which affected her life without becoming overwhelming. Jaffer writes her memoir from a personal perspective, which includes her day to day life as the critical theme and her daughter as the fundamental and defining character of her narrative. In fact, it was because of her daughter, Ruschka, who Jaffer acknowledges is a fundamental and decisive part of *Our Generation*, that she was able to focus on retelling the circumstances of her daily life.

Although *Our Generation* forms a large part of this mini-thesis, it will be considered in relation to Jaffer's TRC testimony, a personal website that she has curated, various interviews which she has done and a short film titled *21 Icons*.[2] Overall then, by looking at Jaffer's journey and the various identities that she inhabits throughout her book, testimony, interviews, and website this chapter argues that there is a need to explore the ways that the everyday becomes available as a temporality for both spectacular and mundane circumstances. To put it more simply, I propose that the spectacular and the mundane should be thought of alongside each other as opposed to being seen as antithetical: both inhabit the everyday as this is where they become manifest. Similarly to Highmore and Felski, I maintain that the everyday should be seen as a notion that is ambiguous.[3] Furthermore, the mundane is

[2] Adrian Steirn, *21 Icons South Africa: Zubeida Jaffer*, (2 November 2014) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cd4trv3FAfE (Accessed 18 July 2019).

[3] Throughout my thesis I refer to the everyday as a notion, theme, or narrative and various other terms. Some might see this as inconsistent however I have tried not to confine it to a particular term or distinguish it because as Highmore, Felski and Grunebaum all assert, it is not something that should be defined.
Ben Highmore, *The Everyday Life Reader* (London and New York: Routledge: 2002), p. 1; Felski, "The

not just a space for women to reside in and something that men must transcend in favour of a grander, more heroic space; instead the mundane and the heroic both reside within the everyday and are jointly enacted in the same timeframe. To phrase it differently, the everyday embodies the space in which various narratives may co-exist. Certainly, the co-existence of the mundane and the heroic narrative is visible within Jaffer's well-documented life. I would therefore like to explore Jaffer's multifaceted production of her history through the various methods of self-representation that she deploys in the construction of her biography.

In what follows, I will begin by analysing the text of Jaffer's TRC testimony, as well as her memoir, *Our Generation*, and the way that she appears in a chapter in the TRC's Report, which focuses on the Special Hearings on women.[4] I will also refer to the *21 Icons* documentary[5] intermittently and her personal website which can be seen as an additional form of self-representation that houses information and interviews relating to her personal and professional identities.[6] What follows then is an analysis of personhood, gender, identity, and missingness in the everyday of Zubeida Jaffer as analysed through the forms of self-representation mentioned above.

The TRC Testimony: "Just one little story compared to so many women."

Jaffer was asked to share her testimony at the TRC's Women's Special Hearing on the 7th of August 1996, two days before Women's Day, at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and two years after the legal dissolution of the apartheid regime.[7] Much of her testimony focused on her detention and torture by police, and to some extent she framed it

Invention", p. 16.
[4] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report, Volume 4 (Cape Town: Juta, 1998), p. 284 -318 Hereafter TRC Report Vol. 4.
[5] Steirn, *21 Icons*.
[6] Zubeida Jaffer, "Committed to Excellence in Journalism" http://www.zubeidajaffer.co.za/ (Accessed 27 October 2019).
[7] Women's Day in South Africa celebrates the roughly 20 000 women that marched to the Union buildings in Pretoria on the 9th of August 1956 to protest the pass laws that controlled black women's movement by requiring them to always have a dompas (passbook) for white urban areas. https://www.gov.za/womens-day (Accessed 10 February 2020).

within the aspect of gender. Jaffer's testimony retold the events of both detentions, but it does not stray into the different themes of the everyday as her memoir does. During Jaffer's first detention they threatened to detain her father, and in her second detention, Frans Mostert, a security policeman, threatened to force her to miscarry. In both of these instances the spectacular is visible in the everyday, the security police are threatening acts of violence on Jaffer's family members to get her to cooperate with them and while both instances evoke the heroic narrative only the second instance has the heroic narrative effect.[8] By detaining her father, the police manipulated Jaffer into giving up the name of a colleague and as a result she felt guilty for betraying herself and her country. In her second detention she showed her resolve and refused to give the information up despite the multiple threats of miscarriage. This resistance situates her in the heroic narrative for not giving in to the torture and intimidation despite the risks to her and her unborn child.

The testimony is important as it enables us to read one of the first public retellings of her story in both a mediated and unmediated way.[9] Individuals who testified at the TRC were asked to come with an account of the violations they had suffered and to relate their story to an audience. The audience is to some extent a shaping factor of the hearing because it puts a certain pressure and awareness on the person testifying. To an extent, victims, in all definitions of that word, who came forward to testify at the TRC hearings were able to tell their story and their truth of the ordeal that they endured. It was only at the end of their account that victims were urged to answer specific questions from the panel. These questions were sometimes difficult but they were allowed to answer it in their own way, language and time. Jaffer asserts her story as one which stands for more than just herself but also for all the

[8] Jaffer, *Our Generation*. p. 11, p. 15 & p. 133.
[9] The account of Jaffer's torture in *Our Generation* is very similar to her testimony and we can most likely assume that the testimony helped her to trace back memories and timelines when she was writing.

other women who could not come forward.[10] "Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak… I am very aware that this is just one little story amongst so many others. So if I tell the story, I am telling it to illustrate what has happened to so many other women".[11] Jaffer's representation of herself standing in lieu of other women who, for various reasons could not come forward, brings awareness to the silences as a result of the TRC's mandate and constraints.[12]

The TRC was tasked with investigating and recording the many accounts of Gross Human Rights Violations (GHRV) that transpired under the apartheid regime through the testimonies of both victims and perpetrators so as to gain as full a picture of the truth as possible. The TRC was also given the authority to grant amnesty to perpetrators who they deemed to have given as accurate and truthful an account as possible. However, to investigate the atrocities of the past, a mandate was drawn up and ultimately a criticism by many scholars – one which initially I planned to research - was how the mandate excluded the everyday structural violence of apartheid.[13] Violence and racism, already prevalent and preceding the start of apartheid, was intensified and systematised during apartheid through its infamous "system of racial classification, the pass laws and its associated systems of migrant labour, the creation of far flung artificial ethnic homelands, and the loss of land and citizenship."[14]

[10] Some women could not face coming forward and reliving the violence and oppression they suffered under apartheid so they chose not to testify at the TRC hearings. Other women were not within the timeframe or eligible under the mandate, in certain cases their political parties discouraged its members from testifying or alternatively because they were disappeared by security police so their family members would stand in for them.
[11] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 127.
[12] Women were the majority of individuals who came forward to testify at the TRC hearings but it was noted that in most cases, they testified not about themselves but on behalf of their menfolk. Ross, however, argues that if one listens closely to the testimonies, it is possible to distinguish their story as well and to see the suffering and trials that they endured. Fiona Ross, "Speech and Silence".
[13] Grunebaum, *Memorializing the Past*; McKaiser with Fullard "Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons" – Podcast; Ross, "Speech and Silence". Mahmood Mamdani, "The Truth According to the TRC"; Ifi Amadiume and Abdullah An-Na'im (eds.) *The Politics of Memory: Truth, Healing and Social Justice*, (New York: Zed, 2000).
[14] Madeleine Fullard and Nicky Rousseau, "Uncertain borders: the TRC and the (un)making of public myths", *Kronos*, 34, 1 (2008).

Jaffer's acknowledgement of the privileged space that she was able to speak in and her recognition that other women were not always able to testify is significant because not only was she aware of her position but she used it to bring awareness to the many women who were not granted the same privilege. Some of the individuals who were testifying might not have felt comfortable enough to speak about what they endured in terms of police harassment because other experiences of torture and killing sounded, to them, more urgent in nature and perhaps, as Jaffer indicates below, they might have felt judged if they spoke about their "lesser" experiences when there were people who experienced what was deemed to be more horrifying, more urgent and more gruesome. It is then possible to acknowledge, as the TRC Report does, that:

> Others might have kept silent because they felt there were not ready listeners. Thus Ms. Zubeida Jaffer described how most people react:
> They'll smile at me and say: "Oh, you're the journalist, you were detained…" Then they'll say to me: "But I am sure they never did anything to you". I think it's maybe too much for people to think that things [like this can happen]. I think also because I am a woman there is always the assumption that they wouldn't have touched me … "[they] didn't really do anything to you, did they?"[15]

Concentrating on women's narratives as the TRC does in their special hearing allows one to understand that, because of the TRC's constraints in terms of mandate, time, money, labour, and other such resources, information associated with notions and spaces such as the home, have been side-lined as background knowledge used only to contextualise instances of spectacular violence further. Texts similar to *Our Generation*, are therefore fundamental in this shift from side-lining gendered narratives to foregrounding them.[16]

As we see below, the TRC gave individuals who were classified as victims a chance to retell their story as they wanted,

> Morning Zubeida, thank you very much for coming, we know that it is not very easy to tell your story in such a public forum but we know that there are many people out there who are supportive of you today and we hope that we will afford you the

[15] TRC Report Vol. 4, p. 295.
[16] See Govender, *Love and Courage*; Maart. *Rosa's District 6*; Chris Van Wyk, *Shirley, Goodness and Mercy: A Childhood Memoir*. (Cape Town: Picador Africa, 2004).

> opportunity as the TRC to listen very carefully and attentively to what you have to tell us. Would you start off by telling us just a little bit about yourself, what you are doing presently and then you are free to go into telling us your story, thanks.[17]

However, because of this procedure which had the element of public speaking, individuals came prepared with a story to tell. Having a predetermined story in mind is both good and bad. It is good because it allows an individual to know what they are there to narrate to the TRC panel and the audience but unfortunately it also excludes a great deal of information that might be relevant in the larger picture. The TRC synthesized Jaffer's testimony into a few quotes within a chapter on the women's special hearing in the TRC report.[18] These quotes function in a particular context and uses the voice of Jaffer to elaborate certain points, as can be seen below from an excerpt at the TRC's special hearing testimony.

> Ms Zubeida Jaffer, in an early stage of pregnancy, was told that she would be assaulted until she lost her baby. Some of the women who had been threatened in this way went on to describe their reasons for resisting. Ms Albertina Sisulu felt "let the child die if the nation is saved". Ms Joyce Sikhakhane Ranken felt "the price to pay … was worth our cruel separation." Ms Zubeida Jaffer, didn't want my child to grow up with that burden on her, because … if she is brought into this world thinking that her mother gave this information so that she could live, that's a heavy burden for a child to carry.[19]

This raises the question of whether she continues to represent herself in the Report or even at all if the TRC writes about her as an exemplar; on the other hand, she is one of a small number of victims who are cited and named in the Report. The testimony and the quotes in the Report, or the memoir (as I will later discuss), relate to the same thing, but carry different messages. Although similar, the meanings conveyed in the testimony are not the same as in the TRC Report or the memoir because each item is contextualised or framed differently, enabling different readings.[20]

[17] Zubeida Jaffer, TRC Testimony, UWC, Day 3, Wednesday 7 August 1996, http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/helder/ct00776.htm (Accessed 19 July 2019).
[18] TRC Report Vol. 4, p. 285, 294-296, 302-306.
[19] TRC Report Vol. 4, p. 294.
[20] TRC Episode 14, Part 04, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tpbYwxjKrEI (Accessed 10 February 2020) I should note that although I read her full TRC testimony, I did not have access to the audio or video recording of that testimony aside from the video clip available on YouTube. Understandably, not listening to the full hearing does impede my ability to hear first-hand the tone that Jaffer had set up for her testimony. I was, however, able

Although the documentary *21 Icons* was filmed almost two decades after Jaffer testified at the TRC, there is a distinct similarity to the words that one reads in her testimony, the words that appear in her memoir and the words that she uses in the interview almost two decades later. This interview specifically delves into her life as a journalist and as an activist, she speaks to filmmaker and photographer Adrian Steirn about her role and conveys a sense of responsibility as a journalist and public figure to her community and to the larger South African public regarding her duty to uncover the truth. She also seems to feel a responsibility as a journalist to help people to express their thoughts, views and opinions that would otherwise be lost and forgotten, as she articulates, "You have to be interested in people, feel for them, you know, because I do feel it's about helping, it's about giving voice to people who can't extend their voice."[21] This is further articulated from her earlier quote which names herself as someone whose story illustrates what happened to so many other women who were unable to come forward and speak their truth to the country.[22]

Her TRC testimony is mediated through the audience by what she wishes to share or not share and by the questions that prompted her before and after her testimony. It is also worth noting that the TRC audience is complex in its encounter each time and encompasses a broader range of people than those that are physically there and although there is a pre-existing audience that influences and mediates her speech, she also produces her audience.

Jaffer's myriad of identities and her coexisting everyday and heroic narrative is important as it makes visible all of the ways that an activist can be and should be portrayed when inscribing them into the heroic narrative. I therefore suggest that there is a need for the heroic narrative to adapt and co-exist with everyday life which evokes a personhood that

to find and listen to other interviews of her talking about her harassment, detention, and torture by police most of which is located on her website. Zubeida Jaffer, "Committed to Excellence in Journalism", http://www.zubeidajaffer.co.za/media/radio-and-audio-interviews/ and http://www.zubeidajaffer.co.za/media/tv-interviews-videos/ (Accessed 10 February 2020)

[21] Steirn, *21 Icons*.

[22] See footnote 41.

acknowledges both the heroic and the everyday as we see attempted by Jaffer's self-representation. This co-existence of the everyday and the heroic life is in opposition to Mike Featherstone's theory that separates the heroic and the everyday as a binary, giving the impression that the everyday and the heroic life are detached from each other.[23]

Jaffer's self-portrayal and representation also shows the reader how detailed and complex the narrative of an activist is. This is especially important when taking into account activists who have gone missing or were disappeared and were either killed or are presumed dead because, as I suggest in chapter two, it is this complex narrative which is a part of an individual's personhood that goes missing when they are no longer alive and thus unable to produce their own narrative and self-representation. The circumstances of an activists' life leading up to their disappearance and death are scoured for moments that people can link to the political narrative. Their personhood becomes re-produced in the wake of their political achievements so that who they are remembered as and what they are remembered for is mainly linked to the political realm.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Zubeida Jaffer.

There is a reasonably substantial literature on gender and the TRC, which criticises the TRC's lack of sensitivity to gender issues and its shortcomings in respect of the way that it addressed victims of gender-based violence.[24]

Belinda Bozzoli uses a theory developed by Habermas[25] that piqued my interest because she suggests that the supposed distinction between the public and private sphere could shift from being separate entities and become connected through a theme or notion that

[23] Mike Featherstone, "The Heroic Life and Everyday Life", *Theory. Culture & Society*, 9, 1 (1992).
[24] See Ross, "Speech and Silence"; Belinda Bozzoli, "Public Ritual and Private Transition: The Truth Commission in Alexandra Township, South Africa 1996", *African Studies*, 57, 2 (1998); Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, *A Human Being Died That Night: A Story Of Forgiveness* (Cape Town: David Phillips Publishers, 2003); Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, "Remorse, Forgiveness, and Rehumanization: Stories from South Africa." *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 42, 1 (2002), p. 16.
[25] Bozzoli, "Public Ritual and Private Transition", p. 168.

links the two together. Bozzoli explores this notion of public and private and articulates that the apartheid regime was, what she terms, “an extreme” example of Habermas’ notion whereby the oppressed and marginalised communities were hidden and excluded from the public view. Her text highlighted that although there are many critiques that one can make about the TRC, they gave a chance for people, who had been marginalised, to speak.[26] Indeed, had the TRC not been created to facilitate this reconciliation there would have been more of a divide in the country. The TRC’s public hearings, which were broadcast countrywide and even internationally, offered a way to end this seclusion and “bring the "proletarian" realm into the public”[27] Thus the TRC, I suggest, by bringing awareness through the broadcasts and media, links the private and the public space together.

The TRC hearings brought light to the hidden agendas of the apartheid government and their propagandist indoctrination that was obscured by their false protection of the white South African community from the threat of the “swart gevaar.” It acknowledged the atrocities that the majority of South Africans faced daily and showed the depravity of the apartheid government to white beneficiaries and international communities through public broadcasts.

This use of the public and private space has prompted me to think about how I attempt to incorporate the intricacies of everyday life and how I might understand my own research concerning these broader debates between gender and the everyday. Bozzoli’s work, for example, demonstrates the impact of colliding the public and private, enabling victims to speak their truth and be heard both by their communities and by beneficiaries of apartheid.[28] The hearings in the Alexandria township that Bozzoli writes about makes visible the routinised oppression within the everyday that the poor and marginalised were subjected to

[26] Bozzoli, “Public Ritual and Private Transition”, p. 170.
[27] Bozzoli, “Public Ritual and Private Transition”, p. 168.
[28] Bozzoli, “Public Ritual and Private Transition”, p. 167.

and, importantly, also draws attention to the gendered implications of women relaying and thus mediating male (mainly youth) experiences through female narratives. More specifically, Bozzoli's work has enabled a reading of how female narratives allowed a reconsideration of heroic narratives and spectacular violence that seems to have been dispossessed from women by the TRC who initially relegated the female narrative to being seen in the everyday and based within the space of the home.[29]

Fiona Ross' work is significant in its contribution to the debates surrounding the pursuit for justice and truth in politics of post-apartheid and post-TRC. Indeed, her work, which focuses on the question of women and the TRC, has greatly contributed to debates critiquing certain failures of the TRC, such as the wide-ranging limitations that the TRC dealt with in their efforts to adequately address the spectacular violence to the detriment of adequately addressing systemic violence. However, in contrast to some of the literature on gender, [30] Ross has also argued that women resisted the silence of the TRC's mandate, couching their experiences in ways that firmly placed themselves in the narratives and spoke of their ordeals and afflictions.[31] She also argues silence itself is a language, requiring careful listening to what is not said.[32] Ross's article explores the differences between how both men and women narrated their accounts and as a result, sees the TRC's response to women as producing a special hearing in light of this silence as insufficient. Indeed, the special hearing appears to zone in on sexual violence specifically, a space with which many women felt ashamed to be identified.[33]

[29] Bozzoli, "Public Ritual and Private Transition", p. 168.
[30] See Gobodo-Madikizela, "Remorse, Forgiveness, and Rehumanization". See also Chris Van Der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela, *Narrating our Healing: Perspectives on Working through Trauma* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007).
[31] Ross, "Speech and Silence", p. 18
[32] Ross, "Speech and Silence", p. 28.
[33] TRC Report Vol. 4, p. 296.

Ross argues that based on the critiques that outlined their failure to include women's testimonies that focus on women as the direct victim of violence, the TRC did not adequately address the role of women who resisted apartheid. In this regard, her article challenges the idea that women did not narrate their own stories and accounts but allegedly only engaged with men's experiences. Her argument is seen to be a revision of her earlier work as well as that of Beth Goldblatt and Sheila Meintjies.[34] Ross' work expands upon this notion whereby the female narrative, specifically black women, were similarly capable of being located within the heroic narrative and it also explores the way that women's narratives offer up more than just the context for men and that we are able to glean much more from them than just the mundane aspects. In fact, through Ross's work we see that women's narratives can also be heroic and helps to locate the everyday as a site of both resistance and the spectacular despite nor being perceived as such. It is those everyday aspects within women's testimonies that not only situate the narrative but also underlines the violence and the structural impact of apartheid on people's day to day lives. Women's narratives were 56% of all testimonies recorded despite their seeming exclusion from the heroic life.[35] Yet read differently, to locate women's testimonies (and thus the everyday) as also heroic – rather than ring-fencing the heroic for their fathers, brothers, uncles, husbands (and spectacular violence) – would be to collapse the public and the private into the space of the everyday.

The debates raised by these scholars are critical to the development of this chapter as I engage and situate the process of gender within the everyday, especially in relation to the following scholars. The work of Heidi Grunebaum, Rita Felski, Ben Highmore, and Michel

[34] Fiona Ross, *Bearing Witness: Women and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa* (London: Pluto, 2003). Beth Goldblatt and Sheila Meintjies, "Dealing with the aftermath: sexual violence and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission." *Gender and violence*, 13, 36 (1998).
[35] See Ross, "Speech and Silence", p. 18 and p. 28; Bozzoli, "Public Ritual and Private Transition"; Gobodo-Madikizela, *A Human Being Died That Night*.

De Certeau[36] has helped me to focus my understanding of the everyday as an ambiguous yet fluid concept. For Highmore, the everyday is a concept that is indefinite and indefinable. The everyday is at first seen to be repetitive motions that are enacted by individuals and by society. When one takes a closer look at the everyday it is everything and nothing at the same time because there is no definition suitable for it. The everyday is the primary location within which other concepts reside and can be developed further.

Highmore asserts that by those claiming the everyday as self-evident and by labelling it 'history from below', it provides a space of dominance which feeds into the notion of the everyday as a "transparent realm." He argues that instead of uncovering the hidden stories as this term aspires to do, it only substitutes one for another so that, "instead of looking at government records, attic rooms are plundered for diaries, letters and such."[37] Certainly there is a fine line to balance which allows the everyday its transparency to "be" as it pleases and to not constrain it into a predetermined and set boundary but at the same time it is evident that there is a need for history that is not reduced into a bounded term.

Indeed, it was Grunebaum who first led me to the work of Highmore, Felski, Featherstone and to some extent De Certeau. It was also her work which first led me to the concept of the everyday as a temporality and a spatiality, a time-space for events and situations, both spectacular and mundane to act within. In other words, the everyday is the measure of all things; it is not just a space for the mundane and that the heroic life is somehow elevated above. Instead, events, whether they are spectacular or mundane, co-exist within the same ambiguous and indefinable existence where events in the past, present, and future are collectively observed. Additionally, Grunebaum's work led me to think about

[36] See Grunebaum, *Memorializing the Past*; Felski, "The Invention"; Ben Highmore, *Ordinary Lives: Studies in the Everyday* (London: Routledge, 2011); and Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1988).
[37] Ben Highmore, *The Everyday Life Reader*, p. 1.

spaces located within the everyday, such as the home. The home is stereotypically related to women, and it is also seen by scholars as a space to leave when encountering the heroic life.[38]

Felski's writing, however, analyses and *re*-situates the space of the home in the everyday in a way that does not romanticise either the everyday or the heroic.[39] This is because the home as a space is seen to be connected to mundane and repetitive motions of life whereas the heroic is seen to be out of the ordinary events that are life-changing and usually associated with actions that are brave and potentially life-threatening. Felski's work contests this binary system by exploring the complexity of everyday life and challenges the thought that transcendence is only possible by leaving the everyday behind. Indeed, transcendence is only probable when one understands that the organisation of daily life is by repetition, and it is the act of repetition by which humans can define themselves. As such Felski argues that the current approach to the home and its current connotations should be revised so as to understand this complexity.[40]

Similarly to Highmore, Grunebaum and Felski, De Certeau argues that the everyday is not as mundane and unforgettable as one would assume. De Certeau's work centers on the idea that individuals can rebel against circumstances around them through their actions. He is also concerned with the operations and actions individuals use to resist government authority and bureaucracy continuously.[41] It is, therefore, possible to argue in relation to this theory that many women manipulated their surroundings and subverted the everyday as a site of resistance.[42] Thus women can be seen as heroic for resisting the apartheid government in many different forms in the face of authority. As a result, my focus on the everyday reiterates that the everyday is complex and should not only be linked to women, neither should it be

[38] Featherstone, "The Heroic Life and Everyday Life", p. 164.
[39] Felski "The Invention".
[40] Felski "The Invention", p. 16
[41] De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday life.*
[42] This argument relating to women manipulating their surroundings and subverting the everyday is can be seen in *Knocking on,* Gunn and Krwala.

linked to any particular type of socioeconomic class as it would be unachievable to exclude anyone. The everyday is the spatio-temporality of experience.

Representations in the everyday: locating Zubeida Jaffer

Zubeida Jaffer is portrayed in; her memoir, her interviews and her website as a prominent figure in South African history whose contribution as an award-winning journalist brought attention to the oppression that the majority of South Africans faced under the apartheid regime.[43] Much of the public representation of Jaffer is self-constructed: whether one looks at *Our Generation*, her website or the multiple interviews she does, it shows the audience how she perceives herself, as well as how others perceive her. Jaffer was also involved in many anti-apartheid resistance movements and was most notably known for her involvement with trade union movements and the establishment of the United Democratic Front (UDF) political party.[44]

When going online to look at her 'About' section on her website the first image displayed is a still image from the *21 Icons* short film and shows her smiling directly into the camera.[45] The website itself is teeming with her oeuvre as a journalist, dating back to 1997. All are political and yet the very article for which she was detained is not visible on her website; in fact, I was unable to locate this article at all.

The biography she provides on her website details how her acclaimed career as a journalist started as a happenstance holiday job. It explains that she applied to many companies but the only one that replied to her was the *Argus*. She worked at the *Argus* as a journalist for December in 1976 and became enamoured. Jaffer thereafter applied to study

[43] The Journalist, (8 July 2014) https://www.thejournalist.org.za/contributors/zubeida-jaffer (Accessed 22 October 2019); see also, eTV, "Beauty of The Heart", (11 April 2017) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26RHEypscP4&feature=youtu.be (Accessed 22 October 2019).
[44] SAHO, "Zubeida Jaffer: Biographies" (17 February 2011), https://www.sahistory.org.za/people/zubeida-jaffer, (Accessed 27 November 2018).
[45] Jaffer, "Committed to Excellence in Journalism."

journalism at Rhodes University (RU) while still studying clinical psychology at the University of Cape Town (UCT), but was turned down. Luckily, the head of the Journalism Department at RU, Professor Tony Giffard, applied for special consent on her behalf and she was granted permission to finish the course over two years. [46] Jaffer graduated from both UCT and RU at the end of 1979 and formally started her career in journalism at the Cape Times in 1980; she also spent a short while at the Rand Daily Mail in Johannesburg before returning to Cape Town in the same year.[47]

In 1996 Jaffer testified at the TRC hearings on the police detention and torture that she endured.[48] Her journalism career inadvertently kick-started her participation in activism due to an article she wrote on police brutality in the Cape Flats in June 1980.[49] This article led the police to target her as a person of interest and to her first detention in 1980, only a year after having graduated from both UCT and RU. Jaffer was again detained on the 31st of January 1986 while pregnant with her daughter Ruschka and married to her then-husband, apartheid activist Johnny Issel.[50] Her experiences with and resistance to apartheid recounts the reality of repression under apartheid, which interrupts the mostly male dominant political sphere in the South African liberation movement history.[51] Owing to the very thin seam of writing on women's resistance, it is possible to see her narrative - as she does - as standing for more than just herself and possibly affirming women's political legacy.[52]

[46] SAHO, "Zubeida Jaffer Biography".
[47] SAHO, "Zubeida Jaffer Biography".
[48] SAHO, "Zubeida Jaffer Biography".
[49] I was unfortunately unable to find the article and none of the sources which mentioned it had referenced its location. I have been in contact with Jaffer's PA and await her assistance.
[50] SAPA, "Journalist tells TRC of harrowing experiences", (7 August 1996), http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/media/1996/9608/s960807f.htm (Accessed 2 November 2018).
[51] Gunn and Krwala, *Knocking on*", p. 264; Ruth First, *117 Days: An Account of Confinement and Interrogation Under the South African 90-Day Detention Law* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 2009); Zubeida Jaffer, *Love in the Time of Treason: The Life Story of Ayesha Dawood* (Kwela Books, 2008); Janet Levine, *Inside Apartheid: One Woman's Struggle in South Africa* (Open Road Media, 2015). Hilda Bernstein, *For Their Triumphs and for Their Tears: Women in Apartheid South Africa* (Mayibuye Books: South Africa, 1986); Helen Joseph, *Side by Side: The Autobiography of Helen Joseph* (Morrow, 1986); Emma Mashinini, *Strikes Have Followed Me All My Life: A South African Autobiography* (Women's Press, 1989).
[52] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 127.

It is possible to establish how the everyday functions according to the way an individual speaks about the everyday. Each individual experience of the everyday will be different when taking into account the intersection of repetition, time, subjectivity, and personal progression. The everyday as a concept might be complex and ambiguous, but as Felski reiterates, "it is above all a temporal term."[53] It is not only temporality that is anchored within the everyday but also spatiality. It is challenging to grasp the concept of space as an environment that can be detailed and explained in relation to distance and depth but within the everyday, space can be seen as an environment that is socially situated and developed through interactions with others.

When focusing on spatiality as the social construction of meaning within a particular space concerning the everyday, it is then possible to understand space as both fixed with pre-determined intellectual and emotional meanings while also realising that through time and what Grunebaum terms erasure, it is also ever-changing. As mentioned above, the everyday is the measure of all things which co-exist on a temporal plane. Indeed, Grunebaum argues, "that the everyday is the time-space of historical erasure,"[54] and as such, it is possible to understand the role that time plays in the everyday as a continuous duration that is cumulative and that acts upon people through repetition and cycles and which evidently become consigned to the oblivion.[55]

The concept of erasure that Grunebaum refers to is thought-provoking because it speaks about the continuation of time which passes over circumstances, people, events, places, and spaces. However, this is where Jaffer comes in because her work does not erase the everyday from her journey and even more significantly she plays with temporality in her writing by continually shifting between the past and the present. Jaffer also shows her

[53] Felski, "The Invention", p. 18.
[54] Grunebaum, *Memorializing the Past,* p. 114.
[55] Felski engages briefly with the work of Lefebvre on cyclical time and linear time and thereafter proceeds to include gender as a concept which situates scholarly research on masculine and feminine time.

daughter growing up throughout the book which acts as the temporal marker for her reader to see progression and development in steady increments as she continually shifts between time and space.

The repetitive and seemingly linear motion of time moving forward with repetitive motions that facilitate progress through repetition of things, situations, and actions is more than merely the passing of time, it is also that time is perceived as fluctuating according to the person experiencing it.[56] This timeframe is evident in the case of Jaffer's daughter 'growing up' in the book, as mentioned above. It is standard to associate the everyday according to spaces that are rooted in repetition such as the home, workplace, entertainment, and other such spaces. The everyday appears as a time-space for people to think, feel and act on a day-to-day basis [57] which is evident in the way that Jaffer shows her thoughts, emotions, reflections, and accomplishments both throughout her book, in her testimony and the *21 Icons* documentary.[58]

***Our Generation*: a biography that troubles time, space and identity**

The tone of Jaffer's TRC testimony is understandably different from that of the memoir because not only is there a time difference between when the TRC held the hearing and when she wrote the memoir, there is also the aspect of the re-representation. Jaffer initially wrote the memoir with the specific audience of her, her family and friends in mind. The TRC testimony was something Jaffer and other women were specifically asked to share

[56] Whilst there is a large literature on the notion of time as can be seen in the references below, this mini thesis seeks to work with time as elaborated by Grunebaum and subsequently Felski as they have located it within their arguments. Time is just as complex and indefinable as the everyday and it is rooted in the everyday in terms of how we experience events and progression in our lives as well as spaces that we occupy. See Andreas Huyssen's discussion in "Trauma and Memory: A New Imaginary of Temporality" in Jill Bennet and Rosanne Kennedy (eds.), *World Memory: Personal Trajectories in Global Time* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Andreas Huyssen, "Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia", *Public Culture*, 12, 1 (2000); Njabulo Ndebele, "Memory, Metaphor and the Triumph of Narrative" in Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee (eds.) *Negotiating the Past*. *The Making of Memory in South Africa* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1998).
[57] Felski, "The Invention", p. 16.
[58] These emotions and reflections are prevalent throughout the entire book but are extensively shown as she recounts her testimony; Jaffer, *Our Generation*, pp. 123-137.

as a result of the critique on the TRC's lack of sensitivity to gender issues which resulted in the special hearings for women.[59] Jaffer also intended to write her memoir about her life experiences rather than her media career or her political career.[60] On the other hand, her testimony at the women's special hearing in 1996 was intended to reveal the detention and torture that occurred as a result of her media and political career.

Another significant difference between her memoir and her TRC testimony was her readiness to speak. Jaffer explained to her readers that in 1993 it was too soon to start her biographical journey and give expression to her thoughts, memories, and experiences just yet. It was only in 2001 that she started the process all over again and she decided to finish writing her memoir.[61] Jaffer clarifies that it was with the help of a writing fellowship, an editor, her psychologist, and her daughter, that she delved into her narrative, which became *Our Generation*.[62]

In addition to her own voice, Jaffer draws on memories and the other voices which mediated her memoir. This is not to take away from what she has written but to acknowledge as she does, the many friends, family and colleagues who helped her remember instances and memories and who were able to find historical material and dates.[63] Jaffer's book is inundated with both personal and historical dates and facts as well as a running commentary of her testimony that would not be available in any other circumstance. She provides readers with her point of view of events as they happened side by side.

> At some point I stop, no longer able to go beyond the story of the threats to my unborn baby. There is some noise in the hall. "I am sorry, Zubeida." Says Glenda, "Carry on please." "No," I say. "I don't think I want to say anything further." I am feeling completely numb. I know there is more to say but I have had enough. I just don't have the strength. [64]

[59] TRC Report Vol. 4, p. 284
[60] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 163.
[61] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 163.
[62] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 163.
[63] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 163.
[64] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 133.

The personal perspective is beneficial when one considers the transcribed testimony from the hearing as opposed to the detailed way Jaffer portrays and situates her testimony in the book. Jaffer details prominent events such as political funerals, protests, detention, and resistance and also addresses issues of family, religion, gender, and the everyday.

Zubeida Jaffer's various identities are key because they are extensions of her voice in the various spaces of home, work, activism, motherhood, daughterhood, religion and more that she embraces and as such, it is necessary to examine her self-representation. Questions come to mind such as, what is Jaffer's voice of gender and the everyday, where does it appear and what is it saying at different moments? These questions help one to understand that individuals "speak in different ways to different audiences in different spaces and different voices all the time."[65] Jaffer's memoir, which is also a form of her voice, is in turn mediated by many other voices that contribute to the story, such as her family, her activist colleagues, her work colleagues, and naturally her intended audience.

Jaffer speaks about the TRC's Special Hearing for Women and how she struggled with whether she would speak at the hearing at all and if she did, how much would she tell the audience. She relates her experience of the testimony first hand in her memoir; this account draws the reader in, in a way that makes one feel as though they had personally accompanied her. Jaffer narrates how she becomes disembodied through the experience of recalling the torture, harassment, and ill-treatment.

> I am losing my concentration. I feel it. I hear myself at a distance again. I am no longer aware of the audience. "Then he left and he left me in this room – left me in this room with these two policemen and he said to them they must watch me. And they made me stand in the middle of the room and I just had to stand there and then at some point they allowed me to sit." God, I am only at the first detention in 1980. How on earth am I going to describe 10 years of ongoing harassment? I cannot stop now… There is so much to tell. I am conscious of the fact that eight of us are set down to testify today. I am allowed to speak for as long as I want to but I know that I have to strip years of intense experience down to its bare minimum.[66]

[65] I am thankful to Professor Leslie Witz for this insightful elaboration.
[66] Jaffer. *Our Generation*, pp. 129-131.

Our Generation gives us a sense of much more than just the politics of apartheid, it gives us what the TRC calls, a "personal and narrative truth," truth as constructed rather than as forensic and factually correct. [67] This is not to say that *Our Generation* is factually incorrect or exaggerated. Rather, although all speech is in some way mediated consciously or unconsciously, Jaffer performs different identity positions throughout her writing. Certainly, reading her through Judith Butler, it is possible to understand how having a singular identity or an identity that is all-encompassing and self-maintained is a fiction. As Butler articulates,

> The recognition that one is, at every turn, not quite the same as how one presents oneself in the available discourse might imply, in turn, a certain patience with others that would suspend the demand that they be self-same at every moment. Suspending the demand for self-identity or, more particularly, for complete coherence seems to me to counter a certain ethical violence, which demands that we manifest and maintain self-identity at all times and require that others do the same.[68]

Indeed, Butler's analysis allows one to grapple with the notion of identity as we understand what she terms the self in relation to others in terms of language and social relationships that occur within normative structures. We are unable to control the external perspective that others might have of ourselves and, as a result, the identity that is communicated to others is obfuscated and never quite provides a full impression or account of one's identity or one's self to whom we address. As Jaffer reiterates, "I've got many identities but I am not prepared to accept that I am one thing only."[69] Jaffer's reluctance to locate herself within one identity is then understandable as she does not feel as though one identity can encompass her. As Edkins reiterates, "There will always be a lack or an excess, a gap between what we think we are and what we are (if there even is such a thing)."[70]

However, this becomes problematised when watching *21 Icons* which is filmed nearly two decades after she testified at the TRC special women's hearing and just over a decade

[67] TRC Report Vol. 1, pp. 110-114.
[68] Judith Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005) p. 41.
[69] See Steirn, *21 Icons.*
[70] Jenny Edkins, "Politics and Personhood: Reflections On The Portrait Photograph" *Alternatives*, 38, 2 (2013), p. 144.

after she published her memoir. Jaffer is represented in *21 Icons* as someone who dealt with the bad of apartheid within her personal life, stood up for her community and the larger South African community, was a leader to fellow activists and kept moving forward and fighting for progression in her country. Furthermore, the representation within *21 Icons* of Zubeida Jaffer is intended to make visible her sacrifices, her courage and her strength as a journalist in a heavily censored time and which aims to inspire viewers with her tenacity. This inspiration draws on the heroic narrative and hardly mentions her everyday as has been included in her memoir. At the same time, and for lack of a better quote, Jaffer asserts in the video while holding a copy of her memoir that "I've got many identities but I am not prepared to accept that I am one thing only." This lack and excess of identity that Bozzoli has spoken about has been a theme which has been constant throughout Jaffer's various self-maintained representations.

Conclusion:

Our Generation: Reflecting on the everyday and personhood

Ruschka is the first person we encounter in *Our Generation*, and this introduction is almost a signifier to the reader of how important she is to the book's inception. In order to start answering questions regarding Jaffer's voice, it is necessary to look at her identity as a mother to her daughter.[71] Ruschka was almost a victim of spectacular violence, owing to police brutality and torture during her mother's second detention while she was still a foetus. Ruschka manages to bring out a different dimension of her mother, which Jaffer articulately conveys through the different aspects of tension, worry, and concern, "Motherhood is forcing adjustments…I am no longer a single woman able to follow her whim. It is a funny state to

[71] For ease of reference the questions I ask are - what is Jaffer's voice of gender and the everyday, where does it appear and what is it saying at different moments?

be in; I think as I navigate the heavy traffic on the road to Bellville. I had never considered the change her presence would bring to my life."[72]

Ruschka is the temporal marker of time passing, but for Jaffer she also serves as a reminder of day to day living, grounding her mother's life. This grounding is evident through Jaffer slowing down and distancing herself from activist duties, which she attributes to Ruschka as well as being mentally and emotionally overwhelmed. "I laugh and thanking [sic] God for giving her to me as a happy warm glow glides through my body. [Ruschka] has brought a certain balance into my life that has made it easy to leave behind the pressured life of activist and organizer."[73] Jaffer realizes in an earlier section that due to her psychological post-traumatic stress disorder and depression, she and her daughter have become reclusive.[74] In order to start climbing out of her reclusive lifestyle she decides that she will host a birthday party for Ruschka.[75] Birthdays and other such celebration events are normal events which are happily anticipated by society throughout the year but after Jaffer's PTSD she admits that it was a celebration from which she shied away.

As Jaffer narrates how she feels mentally and emotionally overwhelmed, it evokes the similarly strenuous mental and emotional burden that others also endured through the struggle.[76] The constraints of the heroic narrative often deny these psychological traumas an entry to the public domain.[77] Jaffer suggests that after testifying at the TRC, she became

[72] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 39.
[73] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 39.
[74] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 55.
[75] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, pp. 152-153.
[76] There were also other activists that spoke about mental and physical health issues they suffered as a result of the severe-ill treatment that they endured due to their activism. Thandi Shezi, an activist, whose narrative will be explored in Chapter Two speaks out about perpetrating domestic violence. Pregs Govender, former ANC MP who now serves as the deputy chairperson of the South African Human Rights Commission, has explored issues similar to Jaffer in her book; Govender, *Love and Courage*, including issues of gender, sexual violence, religion, as well as the political narrative weaved into the everyday narrative. Historian Paul Gready also delves into the struggle literature by looking at the language and the writing that prisoners did to circumvent the ways that they were 'captured and fixed in official writing.' This genre of autobiographical work was "scratched onto cell walls" and gave prisoners a method to reclaim their narrative. Paul Gready, "Autobiography and the 'Power of Writing': Political Prison Writing in the Apartheid Era", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 19, 3 (1993).
[77] This will be discussed further in Chapter Two.

anxious and depressed and she struggled to get through this period of her life.[78] Eventually, she asserts that through the love and support of her family and a psychologist she was able to recover and start dealing with her life again. Indeed, her personhood had been altered from being active in the liberation struggle and she mentions that sometimes there are days that she struggles to handle.

> "first get better," says Ramsay. "Depression is an illness. You are ill. If you had a broken leg, would you step on it? No. Well, your mind is damaged and you have to give it time to heal. You cannot step on it." It is as if I cannot take too much stimuli. The radio is too loud. I cannot look at a newspaper. I am suffering overload. I definitely cannot organise anything. What will I do? I have a child to look after.[79]

This spiral into depression and anxiety is completely different to how she responded in a previous time to the deaths of her fellow cadres, namely Ashley Kriel and Chris Hani, when she did not allow herself to break down. Instead she had used her skills as an organizer to keep her emotions at bay.

> I had left work immediately, thinking about the need to form a funeral committee, finding lawyers to investigate the killing, raise money to help the family. There was no time to deal with emotions. Organising often became a way of coping with horrors that we dealt with daily. We had to be strong for the family, for the community, hiding how completely shattered we were.[80]

This emotional trauma that had been pushed to the side while trying to keep up with her career as a journalist, her multiple roles as an activist, wife to her husband who was hiding from the police and as a mother to Ruschka was overwhelming. I suggest that there is a certain aspect of missingness that is visible in this challenging period of life that she struggles through. In her memoir, Jaffer expands on the many difficult situations that she endured and that challenged her emotional and mental states. Jaffer has spoken about the steps that she has taken to heal her emotional and mental state even though such healing can

[78] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 144 -145.
[79] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 145.
[80] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 45.

never allow an individual to be the same as before. Jaffer herself says that after being tortured, "my life was never the same again."[81]

It is reasonable to assume that the scars and trauma will have become etched in her memory especially when we look at the various interviews on her website that show her reciting anecdotes similar to those in her book. *21 Icons* is one example where she recalls her detention. She narrates that she was, "arrested in June 1980" and this sentence is paired with an image of rain on a window and then changes to the next frame which is an image of Lions Head, a popular hiking spot, behind the bars of a window to perhaps symbolise her detention in a prison cell. The image shifts again to show her face as she relates that she asked the police if they were taking her to Pollsmoor Prison but was told that "Pollsmoor is a five-star hotel compared to where you're going."[82] Both of these quotes are echoed initially from her TRC testimony and subsequently from her book. Jaffer also has both radio and television interviews available on her website where she recalls being intimidated by police at the Sanlam building in Port Elizabeth where they threatened to throw her out of a window as they had done to other detainees and the building where Steve Biko was fatally tortured. [83]

In a similar way, Jacob Dlamini delves into this impaired sense of personhood arising from torture.[84] Through reading Dlamini's book, I have come to agree that the trauma of surviving torture whether one breaks or not would alter one's psyche, and I suggest that this break is a missing part which will never be the same. Jenny Edkins notes,

[81] Steirn, *21 Icons*.
[82] Steirn, *21 Icons*.
[83] Expresso Show on SABC 3, "Award-winning journalist Zubeida Jaffer", (15 August 2016) https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=oZBLjvhb7oU (Accessed 11 November 2018). See also South African History Online: "Steve was stripped and manacled for 20 days before he was transferred to the Sanlam Building in Port Elizabeth, where the Security Police were based. He was told to remain standing, but he defied his captors and sat down. Infuriated, a Captain Siebert manhandled him, but Steve fought back. Steve was badly beaten, and between the night of 6 September and the morning of 7 September, he sustained a brain haemorrhage." (17 February 2011) https://www.sahistory.org.za/people/stephen-bantu-biko, (Accessed 9 December 2019)
[84] Dlamini, *Askari*.

> There is another sense in which persons are missing, a sense that we might call ontological. Any person, or indeed any 'being', is in some sense missing. A person is always incomplete, the subject of a lack or an excess in Lacanian terminology. In this sense, what is missing is that which is unaccounted for in terms of the role or place which persons are allocated within social or symbolic order. [85]

This notion of missing that Edkins raises above is essential because it reiterates what I have been grappling with in terms of the expanding the notion so as to explore more than just a physical absence or disappearance but one that acknowledges the excess and the personhood that can go missing as well. As Edkins further argues,

> when we come to examine the person in political terms, in relation to orders of authorization or authority that delineate and make possible the social or symbolic field, we come across another sense of 'missing person'.[86]

This missing person in the political realm that Edkins mentions is made visible when we think of activists in South Africa whose personal personhood was silenced and that themselves also silenced in favour of being reinserted into the nation and recovered as members of the nation and not as a singular person. Although not physically missing or dead, I suggest that Jaffer extends the parameters of the missing. Jaffer suggests both in her memoir and interviews that there are parts of her that are missing. In line with expanding the notion of missing to being more than just a physical absence, I suggest that these parts which she mentions constitute missingness. It is a missing part that cannot be located under the term missing as it is currently understood and as such I suggest that Jaffer is also entitled to be considered within the parameters of an extended notion of missing. This extension of missing into missingness is also pertinent to the notion of missing which I explore in the next chapter.

Jaffer's memoir benefits from her ability to combine the everyday and heroic narrative, as when in times of turmoil the quotidian things such as motherhood and religion anchor her. Religion is another of the major threads in her memoir: despite earlier misgivings

[85] Jenny Edkins, "Time, Personhood, Politics" in Gert Buelens, Sam Durrant, Robert Eaglestone (eds), *The Future of Trauma Theory: Contemporary Literary and Cultural Criticism* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 129.
[86] Edkins, "Time, Personhood, Politics", p. 128.

about Islam's position on women and gender more broadly she found solace in religion during her first detention. This was not the only aspect of her religion that she had trouble with but her analysis of religion is tied closely to issues of gender. This moment of doubt is explained clearly when she talks to her father after their evening prayer about how she does not think that she can continue to believe in religion when individuals who believe in Islam do nothing in the face of injustice.[87] However, this hesitation does not last and she realizes its importance to her during her first police detention,

> My rejection of the rituals of Islam had ended two years later in 1980, when the faint sound of my dad's voice had pierced the room where I was being detained. They were about to drive me to Port Elizabeth and had allowed my parents to deliver some clean clothing. What could I do to attract them? How could I let them know that I was alive and strong? What would carry my voice as far as it could go? I had taken a deep breath: "Ya Nabee salaam a'leika. Ya Rasool salaam, a'leika… (Oh prophet, peace be upon you. Oh prophet, peace be upon you.)…" Angrily, a cop had barged into the room, telling me that I was breaking the law. I had stopped, satisfied that I had made contact with my parents. The incident had forced me to acknowledge how integral this religion, warts and all, was to my life.[88]

She does not sideline these identities in favour of her political proclivities, because she does not use the political as a base for her story. Instead, she portrays the everyday as the base of her narrative because her story is personal, there is more to Jaffer's narrative than just her political activism. These aspects of personhood that Jaffer includes in her memoir lend a finer understanding of the impact of apartheid on people's lives, more so than just a political biography of fallen cadres within the heroic narrative. Certainly, the space of the everyday that Zubeida Jaffer inhabits in relation to both the mundane and political activism brings an awareness of the missing aspects of personhood, which enhance our empathy and understanding.

If we think about these sites that Jaffer uses in her self- representations to produce a comprehensive biography we see that while they might each be situated in their own specific

[87] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 74.
[88] Jaffer, *Our Generation*, p. 74.

time-frame there is a distinct similarity that is available throughout her testimony, her memoir, her interviews and her website which links them together. Throughout this chapter I have explored the different productions of biography and representation that Jaffer has maintained throughout her career as a journalist and activist which embraces a complex personhood which I believe there is a need for. Indeed it is an extensive personhood that scholars such as Madeleine Fullard, Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, Belinda Bozzoli, Antjie Krog and others have in varying degrees called for in response to the greater heroic narrative.[89] This extensive personhood is what I argue Jaffer makes visible though her ability to traverse the everyday and the heroic by bringing in the mundane and the spectacular as is evident through her memoir and the 21 Icons documentary respectively.

In the following chapter, I thus turn to the heroic narrative so as to emphasize the mythical ways in which activists are currently inscribed into a grand national narrative. I will argue that an activists' life is more than just a placeholder for history and political accomplishments that can be wielded by the state as political currency. My intention is to bring awareness to these activists as individuals that have a dynamic and complex personhood. Furthermore, I argue that their multifaceted identity will be no less heroic should their personal narrative be included; rather it will be all the more reason for society to acknowledge the complexities that are involved in the heroic narrative.

[89] McKaiser with Fullard "Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons" – Podcast; Krog, *Country of My Skull*; Gobodo-Madikizela, *A Human Being Died That Night.*

Chapter Two: Problematising the heroic narrative

Introduction: Traversing the heroic narrative and everyday life

During the past two decades, the bodies of individuals, mainly freedom fighters who went missing or were disappeared during the apartheid era, have been memorialised through practices of exhumation, repatriation, and reburial. Through these practices, the disappeared, especially those affiliated to the ANC, have been conscripted by the current government into a narrative of the hero. This chapter centres on the political discourse of the mythical hero - mythical because it represents activists within an unattainable usually male-centred context that does not take into account human nature or error. Moreover, as Sabine Marschall argues, such memorialization becomes problematic when there is a politics attached to the representation of certain events.[1]

Those cast as heroes in the post-apartheid South Africa are selected based on their ability to be celebrated by society so as to facilitate reconciliation. Politically heroic figures represent the political foundations that the nation will be built upon and as such their personhood should encompass both their multi-layered personal and political identity. The physical, emotional, and mental aspects of recovering and reclaiming missing bodies, only to attach or superimpose a political biographies and names does not render them less missing.

Indeed, both the everyday and the heroic narrative should be considered as ambiguous and complex concepts. As Rita Felski argues, "Everyday life … recognizes that every life contains an element of the ordinary. We are all ultimately anchored in the mundane."[2] The ambiguity associated with the everyday life, which I have explored in Chapter One, and its daily repetition and familiarity is integral to the heroic. I maintain that the heroic narrative is

[1] Sabine Marschall, Commemorating "'Struggle Heroes': Constructing a Genealogy for the New South Africa", *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 12, 2 (2006), p. 181.
[2] These concepts are linked through time/temporality, language, and resistance, and it allows us to realize that the everyday is a "life-world", a conceptual breeding ground which as Felski asserts, allows the formation of "conceptualizations, definitions and narratives," thus confirming its indefinability. See Felski, "The Invention", p. 16.

not a space that is separated and elevated above the everyday but that both the heroic and the mundane take place in the ambiguous space of the everyday.

Certainly, the heroic narrative is problematised when one acknowledges it also as a gendered space, which locates men as the standard by which a hero is judged. Elaine Unterhalter describes this as "heroic masculinity" and explains that, "The work of the nation draws on a particular portrayal of masculinity".[3] As the TRC acknowledges, "what happens is that men and the experiences of men become the yardstick by which judgements are made."[4] In this chapter, I explore this through the figure of Siphiwo Mthimkulu, an activist tortured then later abducted and killed, who is automatically granted access to the heroic narrative and thus provides a template for a male-centric heroism.[5] Political and gendered issues are brought to the forefront by debating the impact of women's resistance during apartheid,[6] their conflicted status within violent and military spaces, the set male standard of heroism and the process of legitimating the ANC dominated government regime through memorialisation practices.[7]

Despite awareness of gendered roles in society, there still seems to be a resistance from society to move away from the notion of home and the everyday associated with women

[3] Elaine Unterhalter, "The Work Of The Nation: Heroic masculinity in South African Autobiographical Writing of The Anti-Apartheid Struggle", *The European Journal of Development Research*, 12, 2 (2000), p.158.
[4] Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Report, "Special Hearing on Women", 4, 10, p.284.
[5] Mark Kaplan, Between Joyce and Remembrance, DVD, Johannesburg: SABC (Grey Matter Media, Film Resource Unit, 2004).
[6] *Knocking on: Mothers and daughters in struggle in South Africa*. (eds.) Shirley Gunn and Sinazo Krwala. Published by the Human Rights Media Centre (HMRC) Cape Town in collaboration with Centre for the study of Violence and Reconciliation Johannesburg (CSVR) 2008.
[7] Unterhalter, "The Work Of The Nation.", Sabine Marschall, "Pointing To The Dead: Victims, Martyrs and Public Memory in South Africa" *South African Historical Journal*, 60 (2008), Marschall, "Commemorating 'Struggle Heroes'"; Meg Samuelson, "The Disfigured Body Of The Female Guerrilla: (De)Militarization, Sexual Violence, and Redomestication in Zoe¨ Wicomb's *David's Story", Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society,* 32, 4 (2007); Simone Kerseboom, "Pitied Plumage And Dying Birds: The Public Mourning of National Heroines and Post-Apartheid Foundational Mythology Construction" (Unpublished PhD thesis: Rhodes University, December 2014); Jacklyn Cock, "Women and the Military: Implications for Demilitarization in the 1990s in South Africa", *Gender and Society*, 8, 2 (1994); Sofia Axelsson, "Gendered Struggle for Freedom: A Narrative Inquiry into Female Ex-Combatants in South Africa", in *Female Combatants in Conflict and Peace: Challenging Gender in Violence and Post-Conflict Reintegration* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2015); Felski. "The Invention".

while the non-home and heroic is associated with men.[8] I make this traversal evident through examining the after-life of Nokuthula Simelane whose induction into the heroic life is based on her commitment to the struggle by enduring torture and death rather than giving up sensitive information and turning into a traitor. Her silence in the face of death was an act of heroism and bravery not typically associated with women, which I suggest is the cause for her investiture into the heroic life. Indeed, the biographies of both Simelane and Mthimkulu are comparable to the extent that one might ask what the difference is between the two activists other than their gender.

My objective for Chapter Two is thus to explore the heroic narrative as a privileged and gendered space so as to navigate these ambiguous and, at times, conflicted spaces of gender and everyday life.[9] This is followed by an analysis of the heroic narrative as related to questions of nation, political institutions, and narrative constructions through the lives of Simelane and Mthimkulu. I draw upon the podcast, *digging up the truth about missing persons* narrated by Madeleine Fullard and Eusebius McKaiser as they expand on the heroic narrative and what it means to be understood as a hero and the politics surrounding the heroic narrative.[10]

Hallowed inscriptions: acknowledging the dead

Individuals seen as heroes are frequently appropriated by newly elected states into being the ultimate political symbols of freedom and sacrifice; this is doubly true for heroes who have given their lives to the cause. Katherine Verdery's work can be read as raising questions about to whom the body belongs to after death, whose inscription has the most

[8] Women were able to simultaneously traverse both the home and the heroic spaces, and this traversal is seen in Chapter One through the life of Zubeida Jaffer who explores what it is like to be a daughter, wife, mother, *and* an activist while her husband who is also an activist, hides from the police.
[9] Mike Featherstone, "The Heroic Life and Everyday Life", *Theory, Culture & Society*, 9, 1 (1992); Felski, "The Invention"; Unterhalter, "The Work of The Nation"; Samuelson, "The Disfigured Body of the Female Guerrilla"; Marschall, "Pointing To The Dead"; Marschall, "Commemorating 'Struggle Heroes".
[10] McKaiser with Fullard "Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons" – Podcast.

authority and what the effects are of being missing. Her argument is based on the fact that "Although death is the great universal, it calls forth human responses that are extraordinarily varied."[11]

This human response and the question of who owns the body is activated and especially complicated when someone goes missing. Jenny Edkins, drawing on the work of Judith Butler, argues that due to the relational aspect between humans, governments may acknowledge a selective responsibility toward missing persons.[12] Individuals fall into two categories; they are either "the named and the famous [or they are] the anonymous and or nameless dead."[13] These classifications are particularly meaningful as it shows the dualistic approaches and the ways in which different missing bodies are dealt with according to the respective category. Indeed when looking at these classifications of 'named' or 'nameless' in the context of South Africa it also brings attention to the ways that the mass media acknowledge these individuals, the government and family.

Families too usually want their loved one(s) to be acknowledged for their sacrifices because it, in turn, means that their loss and their grief gets acknowledged too. [14] Indeed, as Ciraj Rassool, Nicky Rousseau, Jay Aronson, and Madeleine Fullard suggest, families themselves sometimes invoke the politically charged heroic narrative because they want the respect and ceremony attached to this narrative to be attributed to their loved one.[15] Fullard argues that there is a need for the heroic narrative both on the part of the state and on the part of the family. This is evident when one looks at the inscription into the national state

[11] Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies",* p. 22.
[12] Jenny Edkins, "Preface" in *Missing,* p. vii.
[13] Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies*, p. 4.
[14] There seems to be an overwhelming responsibility for family and loved ones to encourage heroic narratives; otherwise, their dead seemingly sink into oblivion and cannot or do not count in the narrative of the nation. This is not to say that the heroic narrative is unwanted by the community or by the surviving family members but that there is a refusal to show the realistic side of the heroic narrative.
[15] Ciraj Rassool, "Re-storing the skeletons of empire: Return, reburial and rehumanisation in Southern Africa", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 41, 3, (2015); Rousseau, "Eastern Cape Bloodlines", p.12; Aronson, "The Strengths and Limitations", p. 277; McKaiser with Fullard "Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons" – Podcast.

narrative through burial and symbolic ceremonies in cases where remains were unable to be found. However, Fullard also includes aspects of the everyday thus trying to 'rehumanise' activists and show how the normal and ordinary infiltrated the heroic life.

Fullard argues that narratives should include how individuals made mistakes: they fell asleep and did not get to their meetings; they went out for a drink with friends or comrades instead of staying in hiding. Sometimes activists were in places they should not have been for personal reasons or they might have died from natural causes instead of being killed by the security police and as a result their death might not be seen as a hero's death. There were a multitude of reasons where things did not go as planned, but as Fullard elucidates,

> … a guerilla can only die in one way and that is he must fight to the last bullet. That is the prescribed death for a combatant. But we find these stories that don't necessarily match that and …we try to say this is also part of the humanity of being an underground operative that people would make mistakes.[16]

Dealing with the ethics of giving the family the truth of what happened to their loved one is complex and intimate because sometimes it can break families apart. The heroic narrative thus becomes problematic because it perpetuates this generic but also mythical and unattainable status of a hero that becomes idolised by many, including families.[17] Indeed, most individuals who fought for the cause cannot live up to this standard of heroism and are unfairly judged against it. Mike Featherstone maintains that, despite having the ability to impose a narrative upon an individual retrospectively, one should not dismiss the life a hero lived before. Indeed, he argues that it is essential that the life before entering the realm of the heroic life is also judged as more than a formless existence.[18] Acknowledging the personhood and the biography of the dead is key as I will demonstrate below.

[16] McKaiser with Fullard "Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons" – Podcast.
[17] Aronson and Fullard lament the expectations that sometimes go unfulfilled for families because of the unrealistic expectations created by the first symbolic reburial of activist Reginald Kekana.
[18] Featherstone, "The Heroic Life and Everyday Life", p.166.

The everyday life of missing narratives: Siphiwo Mthimkulu.

Siphiwo Mthimkulu, along with Tobekile 'Topsy' Madaka, were both abducted in Port Elizabeth and taken to an abandoned police station (Post Chalmers) where they were drugged, shot and burned to death.[19] Following an investigation, the MPTT concluded that the remains were disposed of in two septic tanks along with objects such as clothing or coins. These objects of day-to-day life reinsert the humanity of these activists as well as providing evidence of their last days. As Rousseau argues,

> If recognizing bone was central to identifying the human, artefacts assembled the idea of a more fleshed, corporeal body. A shoe or zipper fragment, shoelace, button, buckle, a door key, some coins: these were more agentive in assembling the human persons, just as tyre, diesel, bullets, beer bottles, summoned their killers, suggesting the human is held together less by physical body, but assembled through fragments, things or objects, sensorial and affective.[20]

The symbolic process of memorialising a disappeared individual through the various acts of tracing and tracking them, identifying them, if their remains are found, and either memorialising or burying them reveals a personhood outside of the political. This process usually unravels the personhood according to family members and loved ones, but the personhood that is attached to a political activist is set aside in favour of a heroic narrative.

Jillian Edelstein has captured an image of Joyce Mthimkulu, a mother who is mourning her son but looks forward with a steely resolution. Mrs. Mthimkulu holds the clump of his hair and scalp that she had taken with to the TRC hearings almost 15 years after his death in her right hand raised upright in a fist, symbolic as a power salute which is raised when one cries the political maxim *Amandla – Awethu*.[21]

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[19] First detained and poisoned by thallium in 1981, Mthimkulu became extremely ill to the point that his hair fell out in large clumps with pieces of his scalp attached. On his release he dared to take the South African Police Service (SAPS) to court for the torture and poisoning, which almost led to his death. Mthimkulu's courage to stand up to the security police was seen by his friends and family as both bravery and foolhardiness because it was a dangerous situation to handle, which proved true a year later. Leslie, "Life and times of a youth activist"; South African Press Association (SAPA), "Police General Tells How He Executed Drugged Activist" (Port Elizabeth: 24 September 1997), http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/media%5C1997%5C9709/s970924c.htm (Accessed 22 February 2018).

[20] Rousseau, "Eastern Cape Bloodlines", p.8.

[21] *Amandla - Awethu* is a political maxim that translates as "Power to the people".

Mrs. Mthimkulu kept this piece of him, it was all that remained of her son. She used the materiality and agency of her son's hair to make visible the truth that Gideon Nieuwoudt tried to silence. Nieuwoudt tried to manipulate the narrative by having court orders against Mrs. Mthimkulu so that she could not speak at the TRC about what she had witnessed. When she collected his hair, her son was still alive and by her own testimony she was not sure why she kept it other than an inkling that she might need it one day to show as evidence. Mrs. Mthimkulu kept her son's hair for so many years and it was that type of determination that allowed her to bide her time despite Nieuwoudt's attempts to silence her.[22] Only after she testified, and only after she showed her son's hair to the TRC commission did she grant herself the space to inter his hair into the ground as a symbolic burial.[23] This image then is one of the last times that she held what remained of her son and it becomes a stark and powerful reminder of the trials that she faced in order to finally represent not only her son's story, but her story and in it the hardship that she faced to get to the TRC's hearing.

Edelstein engages the viewer with such varying but captivating images which provides a unique and invaluable perspective of both victims and perpetrators 'side by side'.

[22] Cited in Moosage, "Missing-ness, History and Apartheid-era disappearances".
See also Testimony of Joyce Mthimkulu, Human Rights Violation Hearing, Port Elizabeth (26 June 1996), http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/hrvpe2/mtimkhul.htm (Accessed 11 November 2019).
[23] Rousseau, "Eastern Cape Bloodlines.", p. 7. See also Mark Sanders, *Ambiguities of Witnessing: Law and Literature In The Time Of A Truth Commission* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2007)

One might wonder as Edelstein does why perpetrators might offer themselves up "willingly for a portrait, often proudly, as if they had played some heroic part in South Africa's history."[24] Nieuwoudt, who played a large part in the death of Mthimkulu, was also photographed by Edelstein with a smile on his face and a cigarette in his hand in an almost carefree stance.[25] Nieuwoudt's photograph is a revealing image which I suggest shows his cavalier attitude to his role in apartheid and his impact on the lives of so many victims and their families who he ripped apart.[26]

Nieuwoudt was interviewed in *Between Joyce and Remembrance*, a documentary made by Mark Kaplan, and had asked Kaplan to organise a meeting with the family. Mrs. Mthimkulu together with the family agreed to meet Nieuwoudt so that they might face the person responsible for Siphiwo Mthimkulu's disappearance and see whether he had any remorse and to have their questions answered. The meeting was captured on video with the family asking him questions about his involvement and why he had only now apologised to them after so many years. Nieuwoudt's answers were very vague and insincere; he tried to manipulate the Mthimkulu's into forgiving him for what he had done while simultaneously telling them that he had come to peace with his guilt which is why he came to ask for their forgiveness. Unfortunately for Nieuwoudt, his continuous actions did not show that he was repentant for what he did. His approach was indecent, and his motives were self-serving. Perhaps it was his manipulation and vague answers or all of the pain that Nieuwoudt had caused the Mthimkulu family that pushed Sikhumbuzo Mthimkulu, Siphiwo's son, over the edge and caused him to attack Nieuwoudt.

[24] Edelstein, *Truth & Lies*, p.16.
[25] Rousseau, "Eastern Cape Bloodlines", p.4.
[26] Although there is a need to include perpetrators in the process of rehumanisation, Nieuwoudt has never shown a real willingness to be apart the process of reconciliation and as I argue a part of rehumanisation. This thesis, p. 9.

Kaplan's portrayal of the family's struggle through their ordeal with Nieuwoudt and the other perpetrators that were involved in the disappearance, killing and disposal of Mthimkulu and Madaka is very personalised. The documentary is one way of unveiling what Mthimkulu's political life was like when he was an activist from the perspective of those that resisted apartheid with him and why it is essential to keep his memory alive. His mother describes in the documentary that she was unaware of what her son did or where he went when he would be out of touch for an extended period. Mthimkulu tried to keep both of his parents out of his danger by minimising the information that they knew about his whereabouts and also giving no information regarding his activism so that they would not be considered as targets. In both the TRC hearing and the documentary Mrs. Mthimkulu explains that she was very proud of her son, but she did not understand or approve of his political involvement.[27]

Although Mrs. Mthimkulu spoke about what happened to her and her son at the TRC hearings, she does not speak at the symbolic burial of his hair as can be seen in Kaplan's documentary. Instead their close friends, comrades, and political stalwarts take control of the ceremony to commemorate Siphiwo Mthimkulu.[28] These leaders push forward the heroic narrative, which is rightfully accorded, but they do not incorporate a more personalised personhood, as I have outlined above, which would make for a more vibrant narrative. As Featherstone aptly articulates,

> It can be argued that the extent to which a larger narrative is employed and sustained to structure and unify a person's life as a whole can vary a great deal. We describe a person as displaying character or personality who achieves a high degree of consistency of conduct; in effect he seeks to impose a form on his life by seeking to follow some higher purpose rather than merely letting his life drift capriciously. [29]

[27] TRC, (HRV) Hearing, Date: 26 June 1996, Joyce N. Mthimkhulu, Mbuyiselo Madaka, Monde Mditshwa, Lulu Johnson, Lulama Bangani, Tango Lamani, Themba Mangqase, Case: Port Elizabeth, Day 1, http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/hrvpe2/mtimkhul.htm (Accessed 25 November 2018).
[28] Kaplan, *Between Joyce and Remembrance*. The official funeral was in 2009 - Moosage, "Missing-ness, History and Apartheid-era disappearances."
[29] Featherstone, "The Heroic Life", p.167.

The personhood of a hero is essential and to reveal them as one dimensional creates a mythical hero with unattainable standards where no one can possibly live up to the masculine heroic narrative. Mthimkulu refused to give up the struggle despite what it had already cost him. This conviction and commitment to the struggle is what makes him an 'ideal' individual to be appropriated into the heroic narrative but Mthimkulu should not be confined to only this. His mother was included in the heroic narrative because of her son but she made her narrative her own after facing the trials and tribulations that Nieuwoudt presented her with.

As has been discussed above, presenting these individuals and their acts of political heroism is only one part of their personhood and so to exclude everything except for the heroic is ultimately to tarnish them, their sacrifice and the choices leading up to their inscription. It is a moral compass that guided them to engage in politics and it should be as visible as their political accomplishments. This relates to the following narrative of Nokuthula Simelane whose narrative is one which is linked to gender and who despite her gender is incorporated into the heroic narrative.

Gender and the everyday life of missing narratives: Nokuthula Simelane.

The South African heroic narrative is noticeably and inequitably skewed towards the narratives of male activists. At one level this reflects the disproportionate numbers of disappeared men relative to women, which itself reflects the disproportionate number of women in the underground and as combatants. This is notwithstanding the ANC's position on gender where they included women in their ranks, albeit only 20% in relation to the men. ANC cadres were trained equally in all areas and tasks as opposed to the SANDF who would separate men and women in their training and in their deployment.[30]

As Cock asserts, even the mundane parts were shared by both male and female cadres,

[30] Cited in Cock, "Women and the Military" (interview with woman MK cadres), p.158.

> "Our chores and daily routine was the same. We dug trenches, did guard duty, shared cooking and washing-everybody did their own washing. We all did the same things and ate the same food. We did lots of physical exercises…"[31]

However, the policies of training women as equals and the record of actually deploying them into combat situations do not match. Cock states that female activists who did manage to be both trained and deployed were often seen as objects of desire, and thus sexualised. Women also had to deal with being treated differently to their male comrades by the security police. Men who were able to resist the apartheid security forces during torture were viewed with respect while women who challenged the masculinity of security police were seen as an issue because they made the security police look weak. Women were also more likely to have to deal with being sexually violated, as discussed later in respect of Thandi Shezi.

At another level, the wider heroic narrative and the marginality of women reflects the dominant ideology of patriarchy. Women needed to find other ways to become visible and find other methods to contribute to the struggle such as the provision of safe houses, organising support and other similar methods of resistance. In most instances where women were not involved in any political activism, it would be because men would exclude women from knowing their political involvements, this was to minimize the risk for both parties.[32]

Mamphela Ramphele, an activist in her own right, argues that she is seen by society through her relationship to Steve Biko as an "instrument of his nurture and the bearer of his son." As she further argues,

> This is … to pose the question about the extent to which that relationship has become a marker on my body that enables the body politic to relate to me. [33] [My emphasis]

Seema Shekhawat argues that patriarchy's entrenchment is so deep that its only variable is its intensity in different places and different situations. As she explains further,

> Bearing and reinforcing the discriminatory patriarchal values places men at a superior position to women. Since only one demographic group – men – is at an advantageous

[31] Cited in Cock, "Women and the Military" (interview with woman MK cadres), p.158.
[32] As seen in the above chapter, Joyce Mthimkulu explains how her son would not tell her any unnecessary information if he would be away from home longer than normal.
[33] Ramphele, "Political Widowhood in South Africa", p.112.

> position in the patriarchal structure, all other sub-groups, including women and children, suffer distinctly before, during and after a conflict.[34]

Heroes are individuals who heed the call to adventure and are imagined to have given up all pleasures of life to pursue a noble quest that aims to aid others. Sacrificing is part of the heroic life that denounces the everyday, of which women are seen to be inextricably part. As Felski asserts,

> Furthermore, to affirm women's special grounding in everyday life is to take at face value a mythic ideal of heroic male transcendence and to ignore the fact that men are also embodied, embedded subjects who live, for the most part, repetitive, familiar, and ordinary lives.[35]

The heroic life is not as separate from the everyday as society would like to think and while the everyday is closely associated with women, women too resisted apartheid, both in their day to day lives and in the overtly political sphere. As Samuelson argues,

> Figurations of war delineate masculine and feminine positions, both depending on and exaggerating constructions of gender difference: men are presented as warriors and protectors, whereas women, cast in turn as the protected, embody hearth and home and are thus rendered passive and inactive. Not only does the iconography of war present such bifurcated gendered figures, but it also appears to depend on them.[36]

The heroic life, in reality, is based on the political realm and as Mamphela Ramphele suggests, can be used to push forward political agendas including, I suggest, by the state. This is especially so when activists are missing and presumed dead and thus available to be re-inscribed by the government, setting aside their personal and familial personhood. Furthermore, inscription of an individual who has sacrificed their life for a cause is the ultimate 'cadre' is politically based, and the person they were before or outside of political realms is side-lined in favour for a heroic narrative that honours the individual for giving up their life for the cause.

[34] Seema Shekhawat, *Female Combatants in Conflict and Peace Challenging Gender in Violence and Post-Conflict Reintegration* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p.8.
[35] Felski, "The Invention", p.31.
[36] Samuelson, "The Disfigured Body Of The Female Guerrilla", p. 839

Despite the dominantly male-centric heroic narrative, Nokuthula Simelane has been included and honoured for her acts of bravery in fighting for freedom during the apartheid regime.

I was introduced to Simelane through Mark Kaplan's documentary, *Betrayal*.[37] This intrigued me so much that in my Honours year, Simelane became central to my research. I return to her once more here because of her curated role as a hero in equal measure by Kaplan in 2004, by the statue erected in her home town in 2009 in her honour by the Mpumalanga provincial government and through numerous media reports.[38] Simelane's sister Thembisile Nkadimeng has taken up the mantle of trying to find out what happened to her sister.[39] Nkadimeng plays an important role in the documentary *Betrayal* expanding on her sister's character despite being very young when Simelane died. Nkadimeng has continued to characterise her sister as brave and a hero in subsequent public representations. She hopes to find out where the security police buried her sister so that their mother can know what happened to her eldest daughter before she dies as her husband, Simelane's father did.

The timeline of events leading up to and after the abduction, starting from Simelane travelling to Johannesburg, meeting an alleged contact and being disappeared has similarities to the heroes' journey as explained by Joseph Campbell.[40] Simelane is made aware of the

[37] Kaplan, *Betrayal*.
[38] Mpho Dube, "Family wants truth after 36 years", *Sowetan*, https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/south-africa/2019-06-20-family-wants-truth-after-36-years/ (Accessed 14 November 2019); Christopher Clark, "South Africa's 'moral compromise': Why more than 300 apartheid-era atrocities remain unsolved", *Washington Post*, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/south-africas-moral-compromise-why-more-than-300-apartheid-era-atrocities-remain-unsolved/2019/08/07/d76daa50-b493-11e9-acc8-1d847bacca73_story.html (Accessed 14 November 2019); Zelda Venter, "Nokuthula Simelane murder: SAPS ordered to pay ex-cops' legal costs", *IOL News*, https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/gauteng/nokuthula-simelane-murder-saps-ordered-to-pay-ex-cops-legal-costs-15324964 (Accessed 14 November 2019); Athandiwe Saba, "NPA to prosecute police officers for death of Nokuthula Simelane", *Mail and Guardian*, https://mg.co.za/article/2016-02-11-npa-to-prosecute-police-officers-for-death-of-nokuthula-simelane; South African History Online (SAHO), "Nokuthula Orela Simelane", https://www.sahistory.org.za/people/nokuthula-orela-simelane (Accessed 14 November 2019).
[39] Alfred Moselakgomo, "Mpumalanga to honour activist Simelane"; Sarah Evans, "Mayor demands inquest into sister's 1983 death", Mail & Guardian (21 May 2015), https://mg.co.za/article/2015-05-21-mayor-demands-inquest-into-sisters-1983-death (Accessed 19 January 2019)
[40] Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a thousand faces: Commemorative issue* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 28. Campbell theorizes that the monomyth or 'the hero's journey' is a simple and commonly reproduced format which can be used to describe a variety of tales involving a heroic protagonist

unique world of activism and resistance and becomes a member of MK while still at university. She answers the call and takes on the role of courier, which seems menial at first but is seen to be trustworthy and becomes earmarked for a leadership position in the near future. Her abduction was her journey and the torture that she endured was her trial. That she is said not to have 'broken' under interrogation and did not provide her torturers with information underscores her heroism.

Simelane's disappearance, torture and death are in fact what inducts her into the heroic narrative. She is seen to be beyond brave in the face of fear, becoming a martyr through these multiple acts of courage and sacrifice. Her narrative is one of even more triumph because she is one of the very few women documented and included in the heroic narrative by the politically and male-dominant sphere.[41]

The documentary *Betrayal* depicts a dramatic reconstruction of a series of events that led to the abduction, torture, and the alleged killing of Simelane, as well as the clandestine operations conducted by the Security Police. It is especially through the dramatic re-enactment of moments such as her abduction that "the urgency, mystery, fear and danger which one would expect had occurred in the real life…"[42] are evoked. It is very much through this re-enactment technique that the heroic is produced. However, Kaplan also manages to piece together Simelane's personhood by using a moment from her childhood, portraying her as more than just a political martyr to be honoured, but also a daughter that her mother needs in order to rest in peace. As Brent Abrahams eloquently articulates,

> Simelane's crying as an infant lingers in the lives of her family in the present. Simelane, her remains, metaphorically, still cry out to her family today, and they

going on a mysterious journey and succeeds in completing their task while in a crisis. The hero thereafter returns to his ordinary home but is mentally, emotionally and sometimes physically altered.

[41] Certainly this leads us to think about what it means for a woman to be fighting in a predominantly male-centric space and also what it means to be a female leader. It then becomes evident that in this patriarchal space that is ingrained into the everyday. Masculine behaviours and characteristics in leadership roles become the standard against which female leaders are measured. In order to measure up against this standard, women have to incorporate affirm these male characteristics to portray the image of the ideal soldier.

[42] Brent Abrahams, "Unfinished Lives: The Biographies of Nokuthula Simelane" (Unpublished Masters mini-thesis: University of the Western Cape, 2018), p.85

> sought the means and methods to find her, to gain closure, and to finally afford her, her due and rightful rest. Neither of the parties can find this rest until they find her. [43]

Kaplan's documentary thus brings together the pieces of Simelane's life and presents it in a way that acknowledges the life that she lived as an activist and illustrates Simelane as a hero for choosing to give her life up rather than betray her family, community and fellow cadres.

Gender is a crucial part of the heroic narrative in terms of how one is inscribed into history. Simelane's narrative, while similar to that of Mthimkulu, is tailored to a masculine heroic template so that she might be inducted on her own right. However, as Brent Abrahams notes: "A genre of multiple narrations, Simelane … is produced by multiple auto/biographers whose speech is filtered through a process of interpretation. Simelane is produced mostly by men..."[44] This insight notes that despite Simelane's induction into the heroic narrative she is still controlled by men and none more than the security police who are responsible for her torture, disappearance and ultimately death.

As I have pointed out previously and which will be elaborated on below, there are other factors that women specifically have to deal with when navigating the masculine based heroic narrative. In what follows, I look at the nuanced gendered politics which explores ways in which women found ways to become visible in the heroic narrative but also how they performed and were perpetrators as opposed to always being seen as victims within the heroic narrative. In the space of the heroic life, representation produces idealised forms of militarised masculinities. As Jacklyn Cock asserts '[t]hrough combat the man affirms his role as protector and defender.[45] However, it is in the everyday that this portrayal of a masculine image can unravel.

Indeed, intimate partner violence is one way of re-asserting masculinities especially

[43] Abrahams, "Unfinished Lives", p. 84.
[44] Abrahams, "Unfinished Lives", p. i. Abrahams was referring to the amnesty hearing of the TRC, but this observation substantially holds more widely as this record underpins much of the biographical representations of Simelane.
[45] Cock, "Women and the Military".

for male victims of torture, this is evident when one looks at activist Johnny Issel, the ex-husband of both Shahida Issel and Zubeida Jaffer respectively. Johnny Issel was an ANC activist who later became an ANC member of parliament and was declared a hero for his activism and commendable struggle against apartheid. In a personal narrative, his daughter Leila Issel later spoke of her father's violence perpetrated against her mother which occurred after being detained and tortured.[46] Leila Issel's disclosure supports Featherstone's argument that there has been a "...long-term swing of the balance of power between the sexes which… has seen a rise in the power of potential women." He continues, suggesting that

> [O]ne symptom of[this] has been their increased prominence and ability to raise questions in the public sphere about male domination, domestic violence and child abuse, issues which formerly could not be admitted.[47]

At the same time, it is important to note that it is not only men whose struggles to deal with the emotional, mental and physical after-effects of detention and torture triggered violent responses, including intimate partner or family violence. That women may also perpetrate intimate family violence was testified to by Thandi Shezi, an activist affiliated to youth and women's organizations.[48] As with Issel, such acts followed a period of detention and torture, during which Shezi was raped by four white Afrikaans police officers. Speaking for the first time about this violation years later at a TRC hearing – and for the first time her mother would hear about this – she explained that after her release from detention, she became violent and intolerant and unable to suppress her anger and feelings about this incident.

> I wasn't coping… - when I started feeling this anger inside me, I would beat up my children. I'd be angry with my children. Even with my mother, I used to fight with my father, because deep down within me I was trying to grapple with this painful

[46] Gunn and Krwala, *Knocking on*, p. 264. Intimate partner violence has replaced the term 'domestic violence'.
[47] Featherstone, "The Heroic Life", p. 176.
[48] Certainly this leads us to think about what it means for a woman to be fighting in a predominantly male-centric space and also what it means to be a female leader. It then becomes evident that in this patriarchal space that is ingrained into the everyday. Masculine behaviours and characteristics in leadership roles become the standard against which female leaders are measured. In order to measure up against this standard, women have to incorporate affirm these male characteristics to portray the image of the ideal soldier.

> experiences, going through. I also used to sing for the choir then… but during the night I used to have all this terrible actions.[49]

Shezi explains that none of her comrades were concerned when they heard that she had been detained because she was seen as a "strong person that could withstand difficulties."[50] Despite the vulnerabilities that Shezi felt when relating her story to the TRC and the audience, she was vocal about how men's needs have been looked after.

Shezi's narrative thus provides an opportunity to look at the heroic narrative. Despite her ability to withstand torture above what her male counterparts were subjected to what this suggests is that women who foray into this realm are nonetheless judged by a male standard and have to also take on the masculine qualities to be seen as 'equal'. Women cannot measure less than their masculine counterparts within these environments and have to suppress any femininity as associated with the everyday life and the home.[51] Shezi's narrative leads me to consider narratives, which are not binary but complex.

The above text has addressed the gendered nature of the heroic, however, another criticism of the heroic narrative is its attempt to occlude that which is not heroic. In this last section of the Chapter, I consider an example of this occlusion by focusing on questions of betrayal and collaboration.

The heroic narrative: looking beyond a stark 'black and white' narrative

Jacob Dlamini's Askari focuses on an MK activist initially named Mr. X1, later identified as Glory Sedibe or Comrade September, an ANC activist that was abducted by the security police in 1986 and turned into a collaborator.[52] The focus on Sedibe as the main character of *Askari* is significant as Dlamini portrays an impression of Sedibe and his potential thoughts

[49] Thandi Shezi, TRC Hearing, Johannesburg, Day 1, 28 July 1997, http://sabctrc.saha.org.za/documents/special/women/56408.html (Accessed: 21 February 2019.)
[50] Shezi, TRC Hearing.
[51] Featherstone, "The Heroic Life.", p.163.
[52] Dlamini, *Askari*. Askari is a term that denotes one as an informer and a traitor. See also TRC, *Report*, 2, p.30.

and reasons as to why an individual would go against their core beliefs, something that is usually absent from the portrayal of hero in the heroic life.[53] Dlamini wants to acknowledge a more meaningful and enriching past that is open to interpretation and shows that it is not as simple as identifying good vs. evil by providing a narrative that can be seen as beyond 'black and white'.

As Unterhalter explains, when activists defect to the enemy side, it is more than just a betrayal of morals, it is a betrayal of brotherhood, "Heroic masculinity is formed through friendship, through loyalty in the face of adversity. It is not simply displayed to admirers. Part of the work of heroic masculinity is the work of friendship."[54] Most political biographies will acknowledge the friendships that were formed because it was an integral part of resisting apartheid in terms of debating with other activists on the moral grounds of action to take against apartheid.[55] There are many complex reasons for individuals to turn on their fellow activists and communities to collaborate with the security police and most if not all relate to safety and security. Individuals who became turncoats were either tortured, threatened, harassed, or blackmailed into compliance. Turning captured individuals into Askari's would task various secret security and policing units with procuring clandestine information, and if they could not be persuaded then they would be eliminated as the TRC report underscored.[56]

In *Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons*, Fullard explores the heroic narrative and how there seems to be a need for it through an inscription into the national state narrative. Fullard indicates just how integrated the heroic narrative is when she is faced with families

[53] Dlamini explains that Sedibe's narrative was not singular or out of the ordinary but instead part of a larger unexplored narrative of betrayal, collaboration and deception that has been neglected in favour of the South African heroic narrative.
[54] Unterhalter, "The work of the nation".
[55] Zubeida Jaffer talks about her friendships with 'Oom Gov' (Govan Mbeki), Trevor Manual and other high profile politicians. She shares about how they would have political discussions and indirectly describes how friendships were an important part of resisting Apartheid. She would ask for favours that could directly impact people in their activist capacity. An example would be the incident where she asked a friend to sew the ANC flags for Mandela's release but the friend was caught.
[56] TRC, *Report*, Vol. 2, p. 70.

who want their loved ones inscribed into the heroic narrative, so that it may help them deal with their loss emotionally, physically and financially. Fullard describes how at times the MPTT would uncover information that could help families discard the accusation of askari that hangs over their loved one and their own lives. Communities ostracise families of traitors; therefore it is especially important to emphasise the heroic narrative that can relieve the burden from the family but also restore the dignity to the individual who was incorrectly accused as an askari.[57]

However, when uncovering the heroic narrative, the MPTT sometimes also uncovers what McKaiser calls, the 'Anti-hero.' [58] Fullard relates a story to McKaiser about an MK member that was involved in a skirmish across the border in Botswana and was believed to have survived. It was alleged that this MK activist had taken the South African Defence Force (SADF) to a house in Botswana that consequently led to the death of a fellow activist. As Fullard explains further,

> He was then branded a collaborator, a traitor. His family suffered the consequences of that. His three brothers were in exile as well. They became branded the family of a collaborator so through the work of partly of the TRC and partly our work now, we were able to establish that this [MK member] died the day of that skirmish. We uncovered police photographs of his body there's no doubt he died. It was another person who survived, one of the other unit members. So we were able to recover his body and return it to the family and rehabilitate his name, in fact, the ANC and the NEC issued an apology to the family at his reburial.[59]

However, as a result of clearing the name of the MK member who had allegedly become a traitor, the MPTT had become aware of who the actual traitor was. Fullard describes how she struggled to deal with what the ethical and moral implications were of either keeping the information confidential or releasing it to the public.[60] As she explains further,

> So we sit now, we know who the individual is. He has a child… that person died actually subsequently and so he died as a hero and he's, he's kind of commemorated as a hero. There is now this story that has emerged which is very well documented.

[57] TRC, *Report,* Vol. 5, p.307.
[58] McKaiser with Fullard "Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons" – Podcast
[59] McKaiser with Fullard "Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons" – Podcast.
[60] TRC, *Report,* Vol. 5, p. 310.

> We've got photographs of him alive and so on. What do we do? What are the ethics of that? Ok, so we rehabilitate one and we condemn another and those are issues that we are not really prepared for… There are ethical choices all the time.[61]

The MPTT are faced with this challenging dilemma and are aware that they have a responsibility to the nation but they cannot be responsible for condemning another family to the fate that they know will be imposed by the community. This dilemma brings forward the debates surrounding askaris or collaborators who perhaps only abandoned the struggle when put in a position where they could not say no to the security police and if they did, faced losing their lives as other activists did.

Indeed, we need to be aware of this complication when considering the impact of activists becoming a traitor and abandoning not only their beliefs but also their comrades. As Unterhalter argues,

> The statement and restatement of this history is crucial to formations of heroic masculinity, because it outlines the conditions which make heroism, comradeship and adventures necessary, dangerous, and fulfilling. A particular history of the liberation struggle is the condition which shapes this particular formation of masculinity. [62]

Thus, Dlamini's work allows one to think about "heroic masculinity" in relation to missing and disappeared persons who were abducted and either willingly or unwillingly turned into collaborators against their organisations and fellow activists that were sometimes as close as a family member. Fullard and Dlamini's research disrupts the heroic narrative and makes visible its complexity. In thinking through the everyday, gender, and the anti-hero, I have exposed the heroic narrative as mythically complicated and ultimately a masculinist narrative, which I will argue in the next chapter, is ultimately dehumanising.

Conclusion: interrogating the everyday life and the heroic narrative.

This chapter has attempted to consolidate some of the dominant threads of the heroic narrative and tries to highlight the implications of prominent masculine representations of

[61] McKaiser with Fullard "Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons" – Podcast.
[62] Unterhalter, "The Work of the Nation", p.166.

South Africa's nationalist past. I have grappled with the construction of narratives and identities located within the heroic life that by default represent male political figures in ways that occlude the everyday life and do not permit a multifaceted personhood. In doing so, it is necessary to question notions of nation, gendered politics and the everyday life so as to attempt a renegotiation of identity constructions and heroic narratives. The lives and particularly the afterlives of Nokuthula Simelane and Siphiwo Mthimkulu have brought forward complex and sensitive threads of nationalism, gender, and the everyday through their various mediums of inscriptions.

Simelane's inscription has encouraged a reading and analysis of regressed gendered roles that do not account for women's contribution to the liberation struggle in ways that traverse both the heroic and the everyday life. Simelane's ability to continue her resistance while in the vulnerable position of being severely ill-treated, tortured and ultimately (although still allegedly) killed fits a template usually associated with male counterparts, despite most of the women in this research demonstrating an undeniable and heroic strength. What the heroic also silences are the forms of heroism that do not represent clear cut political activism such as that demonstrated by Mrs Mthimkulu or in the ways women resisted apartheid in their everyday lives. Simelane's narrative also paves the way for thinking that of Shezi who illustrated intricate gender roles, which position women not just as victims but who may also themselves commit violence. Shezi's narrative is important because it brings forward ways that particular gendered roles can be interchanged and thus challenges stereotypes.

Memorialising South Africa's political past seems to have contributed to a particular heroic archetype focused on celebrating military triumphs and a masculinist representation of political activism. The mythical hero, I have suggested, is produced through co-opting political personhood while denying personal personhood, which does not contribute to the

larger struggle narrative. The heroic narrative of Mthimkulu thus makes visible the need for a different heroic narrative able to incorporate personhood and biography into a more multidimensional narrative that rehumanises the individual. Because Mthimkulu and Simelane are co-opted for nation-building, their political legacy overwhelms their personal identity and I maintain that there should be a drive to rehumanize heroes, activists and missing persons in a way that does more than identify, repatriate, rebury and commemorate. It is a fundamental flaw that in recuperating the missing, they are then cast into the role of the heroic, which does not allow for the ordinary aspects of life which humanise them.[63] Moreover, what I call the ordinary or mundane aspects of personhood infiltrate the boundaries of the heroic just as the heroic infiltrates the everyday, suggesting that both are located in the everyday.

Through introducing gender, the anti-hero and the everyday, I have sought to problematize the heroic narrative and, following Fullard, argue for the unwanted parts of the story. An important genre of the unwanted is the narrative of traitors and turncoats yet as I have shown attention to this disrupts the heroic narrative and challenges binary narratives. In chapter three, I argue for a project of rehumanising political heroes through an acknowledgement of a complex and, at times, conflicting personhood. In doing so I examine the inseparability of the heroic narrative and the everyday narrative through the project of rehumanisation. [64]

[63] McKaiser with Fullard "Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons" – Podcast
[64] The complex and conflicting personhood is one that moves beyond gender and transcendence so as to celebrate the complete heroic narrative of activists and missing persons as I have explored throughout the chapter.

Chapter Three: The process of rehumanising the dehumanised

Introduction: troubling the binary between the everyday and the heroic

This chapter is interested in rehumanisation as it relates to how one is to be rehumanised and the various processes involved. Understanding rehumanisation is key because it grounds chapters one and two in terms of linking the heroic and everyday narrative. The link between the heroic narrative and the everyday life is seen through various ways such as burials, customs and ceremonies. I aim to make this link visible through looking at the way that perpetrators dehumanise their victims, the process of reversing dehumanisation and the biography of the individual needing to be rehumanised. The dehumanisation, reversal of dehumanisation and rehumanisation together makes up the process of rehumanisation which I will be focusing on in this chapter. One might wonder why I would bring attention to the perpetrators and not focus solely on the victims but I suggest that perpetrators are involved in the rehumanisation process. It is the perpetrators' process of dehumanisation which needs to be reversed for the family, for the community, and most importantly for the memory and representation of the activist, so that they may be acknowledged and rehumanised

Rehumanisation is a particular process that requires the person to be acknowledged, identified and claimed, as Jenny Edkins argues, for *who* they are rather that *what* they are, the "person-as-such."[1] Who a person is to another lies in their ability and agency to mean something to the person who misses them. As Edkins asserts, "missing persons are missed for who they are – in all their specificity – not for what they are or what role they play."[2] People are complex and conflicting individuals and it is challenging to describe or define a person

[1] Jenny Edkins. *Missing: Persons and Politics*. (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2011).
[2] Edkins, *Missing: persons and politics*, p.196.

when considering the varying perspectives and aspects of an identity. Part of rehumanisation is to ask *who* is being rehumanised?

As I have argued in chapter two, biography is a large part of the heroic narrative and it is fundamentally tied to the notion of the nation, and as Ciraj Rassool argues, biography is a key strategy of rehumanisation.[3] Indeed, the state responds in ways that construct a particular grand narrative of the liberation movement and the nation. This grand narrative is placed upon activists that are recovered by the state in an effort to insert the person into the nation. These activists are recovered as members of the nation and not as individuals. These projects of recovering members within the nation are, as I have argued in Chapters One and Two, a recommitting to missingness, or what Sylvia Karl argues is a re-dehumanisation.[4]

I suggest that rehumanisation needs to be considered in connection to humanisation and dehumanisation equally. In other words, the process of rehumanisation needs to be considered in terms of how, what and who is considered a human which leads to how, what, and who can be dehumanised. I am also suggesting another notion of rehumanisation which is the inclusion of humanness and not only whether the individual *is human* but whether an individual is allowed to *be human* with all the flaws and facets of what it means to be human.[5]

In what follows, I will look at the process of rehumanisation through the notions of biography, perception, forgiveness and acknowledgement which is tied into the relationship between the victim and/or family and the perpetrator(s).[6] It is primarily the victims who I will be looking at as their lives have been compromised by surveillance, torture, harassment and,

[3] Rassool, "Re-storing the Skeletons of Empire".
[4] Sylvia Karl, "Rehumanizing the disappeared: spaces of memory in Mexico and the liminality of transitional justice." *American Quarterly*, 66, 3, (September 2014), p. 727.
[5] Thomas Keenan, "Getting the dead to tell me what happened: Justice, prosopopoeia, and forensic afterlives" in *Forensic Architecture (Project), Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014).
[6] I will explore the significant change that both victims and perpetrators undergo when the perpetrator acknowledges the victim(s) as a human being and as a result acknowledges their part in the pain and suffering that they have caused.

in some cases, being killed by the security police. However, because of the nature of forgiveness and the unequal power relations that are at play when asking or receiving forgiveness, I will also be looking at the relationships between perpetrators and victims as well as perpetrators and family members of the victim so that I may underscore the process of acknowledgement, forgiveness and perception. I suggest that including perpetrators into this research is necessary because the process used to reverse the damage done by dehumanisation, is through the process of rehabilitating one's perception of the other and acknowledgement. Overall then, this chapter argues that there is a need to rehumanise the narrative of activists who are appropriated by the state into constructing the grander national heroic narrative and misses the 'person as such' in the everyday by focusing on their political status.

Rehumanising the dehumanised through perception

I suggest that the missing aspect of personhood becomes evident when looking at Zubeida Jaffer who is alive and has produced her own narrative which incorporates the aspects of both the everyday and the heroic. The missing aspect of personhood is the incorporation of both the everyday life and the heroic life and becomes doubly visible when one looks at Nokuthula Simelane and Siphiwo Mthimkulu. These two activists are no longer alive and have not been agentive in the construction of their biographies in post-apartheid South Africa with regards to how others perceive them. Rehumanisation therefore needs to be understood as a complex and multifaceted process which has multiple avenues in which an individual may be rehumanised in order to be regarded by the family and or the victim(s). The particular physical and psychological behaviour by perpetrators plays a large part in the dehumanisation of victims and is instrumental in their behaviour towards victims, so it stands to reason that it plays a large part in the process of rehumanisation.

The concept of rehumanisation which this chapter aims to expand on is influenced by the procedures utilised by the Missing Persons Task Team (MPTT) in their process of exhuming, analysis, repatriation and reburial or spiritual repatriation. However, in order to address the notion of rehumanisation one must also engage with the concepts of humanisation and dehumanisation.[7] I will be following Oelofsen's assertion of human as a 'normative' standard. Oelofsen argues that human is not a descriptive term but rather when using the terms 'humanising' or 'humanisation' in relation to human(s), there is an understanding of the appropriate moral conduct suitable for and by humans to other humans. Furthermore, I agree that it is not possible to 'in fact' dehumanise people.

I do not wish to say that the treatment of persons who were oppressed under apartheid were not ostracised, disrespected, tortured, and to use the TRC's term largely severely-ill-treated. Neither do I wish to say that the National Party (NP) did not use manipulating tactics and propagandist language intended to in fact attempt to dehumanise and oppress a large majority of South African society. Instead, I argue similarly to Oelofsen that the attempt to dehumanise a society is based on perception. Perception is an awareness that can be changed and reconstituted to acknowledge the moral implications and unethical behaviour that was committed under apartheid.

As Oelofsen argues, "dehumanization occurs through the processes of exclusion or maltreatment which results in the perception that the other (or oneself) is less (or more) worthy of moral consideration."[8] Therefore, if one carefully follows this hypothesis, it is possible to argue that the treatment of an individual or a group of individuals as a non-human being reinforces the perception of an individual or a group of individuals as 'other', and

[7] The work by, but not limited to, Rassool, Rousseau et al. Rianna Oelofsen, Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela and the podcast by Madeleine Fullard are all insightful and have added depth to the way that I approach and understand the concepts and processes of, humanisation, dehumanization and rehumanisation.
[8] Rianna Oelofsen, "De- and rehumanization in the wake of atrocities" in *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 28, 2 (2009), p.179.

emphasises their perceived status as a non-human being. As a result, this perception might enhance the practice of maltreatment towards an individual or a group of individuals who have been excluded and denied humane treatment.

The security police's torture, detention and maltreatment towards selected individuals is evident in the treatment of Jaffer, Mthimkulu and Simelane who resisted and fought for their freedom and the freedom of the large majority of oppressed South Africans in the struggle against apartheid. The particular maltreatment with which activists and the larger oppressed society were treated, reinforces and maintains an othering which ultimately becomes normalised within society both by the beneficiaries of apartheid and those it oppresses. As Heidi Grunebaum asserts,

> Structurally two sides of the same historical coin, this topography of division and displacement is both normalized and reified through the ways in which the city is represented and the ways it represents itself. The urban planning and "development" paradigms of the present-day city maintain and, indeed, reinforce the historical forms of violence as unremarkable, ordinary and hence, as normal and banal.[9]

Grunebaum's work has focused on the structural dispossession for those who have suffered as a result of both the colonial settlement in South Africa and the establishment of apartheid. It has allowed me to consider the physical and 'normalised' aspects of what may be constituted as dehumanising treatment. People were dispossessed from their families, their homes, their land and forced into menial labour employment. These same individuals were banned from specific seating in public areas and when using public transport. These and many more incomprehensible laws show that in South Africa, "life itself [was] too fantastic to be outstripped by the creative imagination."[10]

[9] Heidi Grunebaum. *Memorializing the Past: Everyday Life in South Africa after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.* (New Brunswick U.S.A. and London U.K: Transaction Publishers, 2011), p. 91.
[10] Njabulo Ndebele, "The Rediscovery of the Ordinary: Some New Writings in South Africa" in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 12, 2 (1986), p. 144.

In the political realm, individuals were monitored under constant surveillance and some were disappeared by security police in an attempt to eliminate threats.[11] Many of those eliminated were buried in paupers graves and denied the possibility of a funeral with their family present.[12] Security police attempted to hide both their part in the counterinsurgency and also their marginalisation of oppressed communities through a process of normalisation within society. The more activists were dehumanised, the less justification was needed. Society were less likely to question this normalised antipathetic behaviour as it became immersed in the everyday especially if they were the beneficiaries. As Grunebaum asserts,

> If it is in everyday life that material inequality, socio-economic marginalization, the corrosive dehumanization of structural poverty for certain classes of people are made morally, politically and ideologically acceptable and become both entrenched and normalized, then it is precisely to the realm of the everyday that we should turn to find the accreted hauntings and quiet continuations of war—colonial, Apartheid, neoliberal.[13]

Of course, the normalisation of behaviour is true in reverse whereby the treatment of persons who have been previously perceived as non-human beings, and are now perceived as human, reinforces the perception of them as human. This fluidity of perception of one human being in relation to another will be explained further in terms of the perception that perpetrators had towards their victims. Indeed, humanity is perhaps most accurately described in the Nguni phrase, "Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu" which when translated means, "A person is a person through other persons" or more colloquially known as, "I am because we are".[14]

Procedures of rehumanisation performed *by* the living and *for* the living.

[11] Zubeida Jaffer, *Our Generation* (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2003). Testimony of Joyce Mthimkulu, Human Rights Violation Hearing, Port Elizabeth (26 June 1996) http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/hrvpe2/mtimkhul.htm (Accessed 11 November 2019), See Mathew Simelane, TRC Special Report Human Rights Violation (HRV), Day 1, Tuesday 3 June 1997, http://sabctrc.saha.org.za/originals/hrvtrans/leandra/simelane.htm. (Accessed 22 February 2019). See also TRC Report, Vol. 6, p. 251.
[12] Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness* (New York: Doubleday, 1999), p.145.
[13] Grunebaum, *Memorializing the Past*, p.119
[14] Mark Sanders, *Ambiguities of Witnessing*, p. 96.

Identification is very much a fundamental process of rehumanisation because it allows the body to become meaningful to the living. It is undeniably the responsibility of the living to rehumanise those that have been placed into this space. Indeed, processes of rehumanisation are very much intended to placate the living, but it does not make these processes any less relevant or necessary. The missing body of an activist is an invisible force that is agentive on the surviving family members, to urgently find out and make visible the truths of what happened to their loved one(s). This agency can be seen in the surviving Simelane family members who have not stopped in their search for Nokuthula Simelane. Simelane's narrative is arguably the most contested of all with the majority of perpetrators denying ever having killed her while two of the security police claim otherwise.[15]

Burials and spiritual repatriation play a meaningful and momentous part in the rehumanisation of activists. The very act of burying the remains or repatriating the spirit allows the family to claim their loved one(s). Once individuals are reclaimed by their community they are no longer dead that are displaced or dispossessed despite still being missing in the physical sense, they are some*one* in relation to others. As Judith Butler asserts, they are 'grievable'[16]

Exhumations, analysis, repatriation, and reburial are all procedures that are performed *by* the living and *for* the living, in a process of grieving that is intended to hopefully end in closure. Indeed, the work of Clyde Snow which is detailed in the work of Eyal Weizman and Thomas Keenan delves into what Snow calls an 'osteobiography' which is explained as, "The bones, no longer the living human but not simply an object, bear the imprint of a lived life."[17] One must then question the transitional phase that becomes visible in which an individual is

[15] TRC Hearing Simelane Incident On Resumption, Day 12, Thursday 20 May 1999, https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/amntrans/1999/99050321_jhb_990520jh.htm (Accessed 16 February 2020).
[16] Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (London and New York: Verso, 2010).
[17] Cited in Thomas Keenan, Eyal Weizman, *Mengele's Skull: The Advent of a Forensic Aesthetics* (Sternberg Press, 2012), p.18.

produced as both a person and as an object until they are identified through forensic analysis and the liminal phase until they are claimed by the state, the family, the comrades and the community.

Of course in the case of missing and/or disappeared persons there is an attempt to reconstitute the missing as 'found' in some form whether it be through exhumations and reburials or spiritual repatriations and, as we see in the case of Nokuthula Simelane, possibly prosecuting the perpetrators in a court of law.[18] Physical human remains are visually unique and emotionally evocative; they require a reaction simply from its action of being. As Fontein et al. argue, "The key question is not 'what do people do with bones?', but rather 'what do bones do to people?' Or more generally, what do bones enable, afford, provoke, constrain or allow?"[19] People are called on to do something, they feel accountable to treat their loved one(s) with the utmost care and respect that they deserve according to practised beliefs, religion, and any other principles. As Rassool aptly elucidates, "There is a wider and growing body of research on the ambiguity, complexity and instability of human bones that have 'double lives' as things and remains of people."[20]

Certainly, the practices of burying the dead are intrinsically linked to a feeling of responsibility to the deceased but it is also related to the space of the living. There is a need to remove the traces of death from the realm of the living. As Rousseau claims, "dehumanisation extends beyond death – 'disappeared' bodies were thrown down a bushy precipice or into crocodile-infested rivers, exploded as if they had 'blown themselves', burnt

[18] Baldwin Ndaba, "Nokuthula Simelane's sister forging ahead with case" IOL The Sunday Independent, (1 May 2017), https://www.iol.co.za/news/nokuthula-simelanes-sister-forging-ahead-with-case-8883377 (Accessed 29 September 2019). See also Evans, "Mayor demands inquest into sister's 1983 death"; Dube, "Family wants truth after 36 years".
[19] Joost Fontein, Cara Krmpotich, John Harries, "The substance of bones: the emotive materiality and affective presence of human remains" in *Journal of Material Culture*, 15, 4 (2010), p. 373.
[20] Rassool, "Re-storing the Skeletons of Empire", p. 656.

on a fire or buried in secret unmarked graves."[21] The very act of rehumanising an individual is intended to reverse the acts of dehumanisation that individuals encountered both while they were alive and after their deaths.

Rehumanising the dehumanised through interment: A purgatory of waiting.

Rassool, Rousseau and Moosage have discussed the importance and understanding of what it means to be human as it pertains to a social network.[22] They suggest that being human is being social and relational and that the concept of humanisation can be seen through social frameworks. Part of rehumanisation deals with understanding the dehumanisation of individuals or a group of individuals and attempts at reinstituting their agency as a human and as a person. While this understanding is necessary, it is also necessary to consider the aspect of dignity and respect that the dead gain in the wake of their death within the community that they identify with. The community recognises the various ways that individuals such as Mthimkulu and Simelane have been dehumanised and try to rectify this dehumanisation by restoring the balance through the normalised and mundane aspects that are perhaps taken for granted. For instance, Joyce Mthimkulu organised a symbolic funeral for her son and buried his hair that she had kept for over two decades to try and come to peace with his disappearance. As Sylvia Karl reiterates, "Rites of passage are important mechanisms that people in different cultural contexts perform to come to terms with life changes or to come to terms with events that disturb the ordinary life of a community, such as war and violence."[23] Indeed, the process of burying the dead is an act that is situated within the everyday.

[21] Nicky Rousseau, "Death and Dismemberment: The Body and Counter-Revolutionary Warfare in Apartheid South Africa" in E. Anstett and J.-M. Dreyfus (eds.), *Destruction and Human Remains: Disposal and Concealment in Genocide and Mass Violence* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014).
[22] Thanks to my supervisors for sharing a transcript of an informal discussion they had with Ciraj Rassool. Ciraj Rassool, Riedwaan Moosage and Nicky Rousseau, Transcript, UWC, 18th October 2018.
[23] Karl, "Rehumanizing the disappeared". p.733

As we see in Rousseau's work regarding the burial ceremony of Phila Ndwandwe, the everyday is present and to an extent shapes the event itself,

> Against violent death's body – skull and disarticulated bones – the living, affective, fleshed body, a young Phila, looked out from family photos, including one with her infant son, from whom the abduction would soon separate her. Beyond this, at many levels the scenes unfolding before the camera encompassed the everyday sad rituals and routes familiar to all bereaved families as they prepare for surrendering the beloved body: Ndwandwe's family in the mortuary, looking through a glass window at the skeletal remains, anatomically laid out, and thus constituting a human body; holding a funeral vigil; preparing food for mourners; emerging from the last viewing of the open coffin before the funeral; and the final throwing of handfuls of soil onto the coffin.[24]

It is an age-old tradition and when burial occurs the only characteristics that differ are the methods used by various societies in their individuated traditions that change and adapt over time to suit the current society. Burials and its processes are significant in its ability to structure the living and the dead. Karl asserts that, "For the relatives of the disappeared, this power and domination over bodies is a cruel form of psychological violence. It results in the denial of four important cultural categories that are related to ritual performance in every society: denial of bodies… denial of mourning… denial of mortuary rituals… and denial of memory rites."[25]

There is a reverence that is attached to the bones of heroes whether forcefully or naturally and requires the community and family to perform traditional rituals according to the position in society that the hero finds themselves in. Mamphela Ramphele elaborates on how funerals were significant in terms of both resistances against apartheid and in terms of mourning practices.

> Caring for and respecting the dead became a way of practicing ubuntu and enacting resistance. African mourning rituals and their political implications for the struggle during Apartheid South Africa is also highlighted in what became known as "political widowhood." The loss of a life partner is generally seen as a personal matter, whereas mourning rituals are regarded as collective practices. However, the death of a leader could not be seen as a private matter, because the public became participants in and

[24] Rousseau, "Identification, Politics, Disciplines", p.183.
[25] Karl, "Missing in Mexico: Denied victims, neglected stories" in *Culture & History Digital Journal*, 3, 2 (December 2014), p. 4.

> witnesses to the loss of life. The funeral of a deceased hero became a "political theatre"[26]

The heroic narrative of guerrillas is not immune nor it is resistant to the everyday pervading its environment in forms of routine, conduct or life within base camps, reading banned books, being educated within other countries, gatherings with like-minded fellows and general institutional operations. The factory workers that Jaffer interacts with all have their own ordinary life that they perform within their personal capacities. It is the gathering of ordinary people into a like-minded space that enables the everyday to transform. Henri Lefebvre posits that,

> In fact, it is true that at certain moments institutions, culture, ideologies, and the most important results of history are forcefully brought together into the everyday life over which they formally towered; there they find themselves accused, judged, and condemned; grouped together, people declare that these institutions, these ideas, these forms of state no longer represent them. Then, united in groups, in classes, in peoples, men are no longer prepared to live as before, and are no longer able to do so. They reject whatever 'represented' them, maintained and chained them to their previous everyday life. These are the great moments of history. The stirrings of revolution. At this point, the everyday and the historical come together and even coincide…[27]

This collision of the everyday and the historical that Lefebvre talks about is possibly most evident in the phenomena of political gatherings that took place at funerals in South Africa. Political parties such as the Communist Party and the ANC and PAC were banned from the 1950s and the 1960s respectively in order to render both political individuals and political parties as non-entities that were denied of any legal protection in any resulting disappearances or deaths. Political leaders and their followers would gather at funerals and use the space to protest and resist the apartheid regime. After apartheid was legally abolished in 1994, funerals continued to be a highly politicised space in terms of nation-building. As Sabine Marschall asserts,

> institutionalised commemoration through memorials, monuments and heritage sites plays an important and ongoing role in the competitive process of laying claim to key

[26] Ramphele, "Political Widowhood in South Africa", p.106.
[27] Henri Lefebvre, "Clearing the Ground", *Critique of Everyday Life*, Volume 2 (The University of Michigan: Verso, 2002)

> icons of the 'Struggle for Liberation', demonstrating ownership of significant events, and strategically appropriating selected dead heroes, fallen comrades or scores of victims. By pointing to the dead, by erecting official, lasting memorials, both the ANC and the PAC shape public memory, legitimate their contribution to the freedom struggle and their role in the post-Apartheid dispensation.[28]

However, these political funerals gave way to funerals organised by the state in their intention to foster reconciliation among the nation in terms of symbolic reparations. As Marschall further argues, "In times of political transition, public commemoration, especially through lasting memorials of selected dead heroes, victims or fallen comrades can be a strategic move to legitimate the emergence of a new socio-political order."[29] These funerals or rather the steps leading up to these funerals plays a large part in the rehumanisation of fallen activists.

The funerary culture in post-apartheid South Africa for activists who are exhumed by the MPTT is more than a methodical procedure of finding remains and returning them to the family. Madeleine Fullard who heads the MPTT recognises the responsibility that the MPTT has to the families that they interact with and the obligation to go above and beyond what the mandate outlined for the families who are in such a difficult and emotional situation. Indeed, the MPTT plays a large and important role in the process of rehumanising individuals. As Fullard maintains,

> Part of the bringing up of the remains and the bones is not just about humanizing them as citizens who have vanished off the face of the earth, but humanizing them as people. To me that doesn't detract at all from the bravery and heroism of what they were doing, that they were engaged in a struggle against Apartheid and they were prepared to die. *I love actually the personal details and the small errors that humanize the people, that they are not just cases, they are people who made decisions, sometimes bad decisions. I would love to see a kind of historical reflection that enables us to allow guerrilla's to be human beings as well*.[30] [Emphasis mine]

I also argue that the MPTT similarly rehumanise families who have been in what can only be called a purgatory of waiting for the truth and the remains. Fullard updates and

[28] Sabine Marschall, "Pointing to the dead", p. 103.
[29] Marschall, "Pointing to the dead", p.104.
[30] McKaiser with Fullard "Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons" – Podcast.

includes the family in every step of the process so that they are always aware of what is happening and where they stand. Rousseau has mentioned that the rehumanisation of an individual, "is effected through multiple means – physical acts of care and respect in handling bones, the naming of parts, readings of age, gender and, yes, race, distinguishing features such as height, build, teeth and cause of death."[31] If the MPTT happen to get a DNA match and can confirm identification, they then invite the family to a formal ceremonial exhumation where they can witness the process as it happens,

> … because for the families, you know it's not just a technical thing. We go and do the digging and then we hand over a body, here's your loved one. it's about uncovering the information and the family having been denied information for decades is now able to participate so we often invite the families to attend the exhumations. [32]

In the event that the MPTT are able to locate and exhume the remains, as in the case of Siphiwo Mthimkulu, we see that it allows the family to come to terms with the information and put an end to the daily horrors of wondering what happened. [33] Unfortunately, many families were not as 'lucky' as the Mthimkulu's.

During the TRC hearings, many families pleaded for the truth of what happened to their loved one and some begged for 'just one bone'. It is possible to understand how families cling to these fragments of information that the MPTT are able to uncover. However, as Aronson argues in his work, it is not just the truth and the bones that the family want but in the event that their loved one's remains are found, the family also want the opportunity for them to be recognised by the state for their dedication and sacrifice to the liberation struggle.[34]

[31] Rousseau, "Eastern Cape Bloodlines", p.7.
[32] McKaiser with Fullard "Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons" – Podcast.
[33] Unfortunately, this does not stop the possibility of a new barrage of questions opening up for the family but it is better to have the information available especially when dealing with perpetrators such as Nieuwoudt who try to manipulate their way into receiving forgiveness from the family.
[34] Rousseau et al. "Missing and Missed"; Aronson, "The Strengths and Limitations", p. 278.

Rousseau's work similarly comments on what she calls the "particular script of reburial" which examines the extended history of political funerals of the early 1990s,

> Political funerals sought to mobilise resistance, these more official funerals sought to pay homage to those who 'died for our freedom', and on whose deaths the post-Apartheid nation is made to rest. This script has been adopted when reburying the missing dead; it also extends to multiple ceremonial moments, incorporating the missing dead into state rituals and intensifying the production of narratives of nation.[35]

The biographical conscription of missing persons is selective, only individuals who are considered heroes can be elevated to the specific national narrative that Marschall expands on above. Fullard has acknowledged the failure of the heroic inscription to include a personhood of activists that applaud them for their sacrifice whether or not they 'died by the bullet'. This re-inscription of the activist as the hero or not at all is also in part a dehumanisation of the person whose daily lived life led them to taking part in the resistance to apartheid in their aim to change their everyday, perhaps even a re-de-humanisation as asserted by Karl.

Rehumanising the dehumanised through biography.

The social framework that I have mentioned above is perhaps most meaningful when looking at Rassool's work on rehumanisation where he focuses on biographical materials and his findings on Klaas and Trooi Pienaar. Klaas and Trooi Pienaar, "colonial subjects of Gamopedi", were dispossessed from their country of origin and similarly dispossessed of their biographies when taken to Europe and displayed in a museum as objects. [36] Rassool maintains that most of the remains that have been returned from Europe have been returned as objects, as some*thing*, but Klaas and Trooi Pienaar were returned as citizens of a new nation and with a personhood attached.[37] In a reading group for Forensic History, Rassool

[35] Rousseau et al. "Missing and Missed", p. 20.
[36] Rassool, "Human Remains", p. 153
[37] Rassool, "Human Remains" p.155.

elaborated on a meeting that he attended in Germany with other museum board members who were a part of the process of returning the Pienaars. The process had been both arduous and tenuous and at one of these meetings, Rassool explained that he used the human characteristics of the Pienaars to describe them to the board members, and as such these remains were no longer objects to the people in the room, they were now rehumanised into persons through the biography that Rassool related. The effect was so momentous that Rassool described the members of the meeting being brought to tears as they then recognised these remains as a married couple instead of as objects. The ordinary life of the Pienaar's became acknowledged.

Not only were the remains of Klaas and Trooi Pienaar eventually returned to their home in South Africa, they were also returned as humans in coffins rather than as objects of the museum.[38] As Rassool elaborates,

> Because a central argument made in the South African policy in how to do a return of human remains was rehumanisation. If you think about what is rehumanisation? You are talking about a process of thinking about museum collections as human beings, as people, as persons, as human. If you think about it, you talk about this in relation to *people whose lives were lived through dehumanisation*.[39]

Rassool's approach to rehumanisation through biographical material is a method that I consider in this chapter to be especially relevant when considering my focus on Zubeida Jaffer and the autobiographical material that she has constructed. The reconstruction of an activist's biography brings forward information that is relative to the identities that the activist has ascribed themselves according to the relationships that they have. However, biographies are also constructed by these relationships, how mothers, fathers, siblings,

[38] Rassool, "Human Remains", p. 669. "Early in the morning of 19 April 2012, Petrus Vaalbooi bade farewell to the Pienaars in a low-key solemn ceremony, while they lay in coffins alongside each other in the embassy marquee. The coffins had to be rushed to Frankfurt in time to be loaded on to the evening South African Airways flight to Johannesburg. Vaalbooi explained the process to the Pienaars, whereby they would be reunited with their people and their land. He explained that the kooigoed or imphepho herbs burned during the ceremony would eventually be interred with them in their graves on their reburial, as a reminder of their time in Austria, where they had been held against their wishes, and of the ceremonial events of their return. He also briefly held up a bow and shot an arrow into the marquee immediately above the coffins."
[39] Rousseau et al. Caribbean pools, Emphasis mine.

friends, partners, and colleagues relate back to the activist. Certainly, the perception of an individual is significant in terms of the inscription that heroes are given depending on whether they are living or dead. Although the agency of a living activist is not unrestricted, it is rather difficult to appropriate their biography, an activist who is still alive has more instrumentality than their dead counterparts to construct and delineate as they feel appropriate.[40]

Inscribing the biography of an activist.

Zubeida Jaffer's ability to inscribe her own narrative, her own biography, her own representation and ultimately her own personhood is possibly a rehumanisation that is most successful. Jaffer is and has curated her personal narrative as an award-winning journalist and activist who risked her life in resisting apartheid but she has also inserted the narratives of mother, daughter and wife, friend and colleague into her biography. Her acts of heroism are as much based in the spectacular as that of Siphiwo Mthimkulu and Nokuthula Simelane, but one significant difference is that the security police did not torture her to death. There is also the collateral damage of her marriage and the fact that her unborn daughter was almost forcefully miscarried due to the torture she endured from the police while in detention. Despite being interviewed by the TRC as well as by private media institutions and the branches of engagement from media, Jaffer has actively constructed her narrative. She has created her own website that is dedicated to her journalistic work from both during and after Apartheid and which she continues to update.[41] There is, understandably, a steering from the

[40] It is possible to see that activists can dispute a biography that they feel is incorrectly ascribed to them. Yazir Henry, an MK activist is perhaps an ideal example of contesting biographies. Henry was accused of becoming an Askari which he vehemently denied. He went to the ANC military commission where he submitted a report and tried to contact many of the ANC operatives to try and clear his name. Henry also contested this incorrect ascription at his TRC hearing where he outlines steps he took to dispute it. See Yazir Henri, TRC Testimony, UWC, Day 2, Tuesday 6 August 1996, http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/helder/ct00405.htm (Accessed 23 January 2019)

[41] Steirn, *21 Icons*.

editorial process of her book, as well as the interviews in terms of questions but again she has been responsible for the narrative that she presents to the public about what she endured under Apartheid which repeats what has largely been explored in her autobiographical work.[42]

I maintain that Jaffer's biographical material in all of its forms as I have and currently continue to engage her work, is instrumental in its ability to traverse the everyday, the heroic narrative and rehumanisation in relation to how it may be juxtaposed against the lives of Simelane and Mthimkulu.[43] This is not to say that Simelane and Mthimkulu cannot and do not traverse these concepts, indeed, it is because of their unquestionable links to the heroic narrative that this mini-thesis sought to link them to the everyday and understand their manner of rehumanisation. It is therefore precisely Jaffer's conflicting status as a living activist which threatens to derail my arguments again, that allows me to problematize the notion of rehumanisation as it relates to Simelane and Mthimkulu. All three activists that I have engaged with are categorised differently to each other in terms of whether they are living, missing or disappeared which allows an analysis and problematisation of the everyday, the heroic narrative and rehumanisation.

The documentaries filmed by Mark Kaplan on both Simelane and Mthimkulu are constructive in their rehumanisation of these activists. Kaplan depicts both families' requests for the truth and the journeys they took to find 'closure' either by visiting the place of torture as the Simelane's do or by facing the perpetrator and asking questions as the Mthimkulu's do.

[42] Her narrative is relatively controlled by her own agency and influence, however as much as she was steered and influenced, she herself is involved in media as a journalist and is aware of possible distortion of truths and narratives when it is released into the public.

[43] The lives of both Nokuthula Simelane and Siphiwo Mthimkulu were documented and analysed in separate documentaries respectively that were filmed by Mark Kaplan which forms part of the material that links them to the heroic narrative. In the documentary of Siphiwo Mthimkulu, Kaplan explores the use of film to keep the memory alive of an activist that deserves for his story to be told and which is similarly true for the narrative of Nokuthula Simelane.

We see how the absence of Simelane and Mthimkulu is made visible in the lives of their families' who struggle to fill the void emotionally, mentally and physically.

The pain is visible in the voices of the family member as they struggle to speak of what happened in the days lining up to the disappearances of Simelane and Mthimkulu respectively. Their mothers, siblings and children struggle with their emotions when they speak. Both Ernestina Simelane and Joyce Mthimkulu became overwrought with emotion when they spoke of their children. Thembi Nkadimeng seems to have put her determination behind the court case against her sisters' perpetrators that she fights decades later to honour her sister. Sikhumbuzo Mthimkulu cannot control his anger and pain of listening to his father's perpetrator speak and attacks Nieuwoudt when he comes to the Mthimkulu home.

Both *Betrayal* and *Between Joyce and Remembrance* are more than political timelines that analyse the disappearances and the encounters with security police. These documentaries pay tribute to the people as well as the activists that Simelane and Mthimkulu were through the images that Kaplan includes, the song that was sung about Simelane, the music used to set scenes and the way that activists, family members and friends spoke about them respectively. Kaplan manages to walk a fine line between the public and private narratives so that his films can explore the ways that these activists were/are remembered and represented.

Rehumanising the dehumanised: A process of acknowledgement and forgiveness.

South Africa has had to address the dilemma of dehumanisation in post-apartheid, perhaps most visibly through the TRC. The majority of its citizens had to endure the process of being viewed, treated or categorised as racially inferior and fundamentally different. Part of the reversal of such ingrained beliefs needed to be facilitated through psychological healing that enables victims to be acknowledged and to be seen as human by their

perpetrators, whether the victim was alive, or by their families if the victim is dead.[44] Following on from dehumanisation we encounter the notion of rehumanisation through the perception that Oelofsen argues for, which I have elaborated upon earlier in this chapter. The act of being acknowledged as human applies in reverse when one considers how apartheid security policemen were viewed as monsters when the full extent of their methods were released to South African citizens and the world. Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela who interviews Eugene De Kock, one of the most infamous perpetrators, asserts that De Kock sought to affirm his humanity.

> The example of de Kock's encounter with the widows of his victims is a particularly interesting one because of the public perception of de Kock as the embodiment of Apartheid's evil. In the 43 hours of interviews I spent with de Kock, I found that for all the horrific singularity of his acts, he is seeking to affirm to himself that he is still part of the human universe (Gobodo-Madikizela, n.d.) and not the monster that his nickname, Prime Evil, portrays him to be. This does not make his deeds any less evil than they were. It "humanized" him and made it possible for family members of his victims to reach out to him with forgiveness.[45]

The family members of deceased and/or missing persons are usually the ones that seek the answers, the truth, and the acknowledgement because they are the ones left behind that are trying to cope with the trauma and emotional burden.[46]

The Simelane and Mthimkulu families have been extremely vocal and active in their search for the truth, the human remains of their loved ones, and justice. Gobodo-Madikizela extends the notion that sometimes it is possible that families want to release the burden and in certain cases are open to forgiving the perpetrators that took away their loved one(s). It is a difficult and challenging decision to make even when the perpetrators are co-operating with

[44] Sylvia Karl, uses the UN definition in relation to the victims and families of the disappeared in Mexico but which I maintain really resonates with South African victims of Apartheid, both the activists and their families in the own rights. Karl, "Rehumanizing the disappeared". p.731 - "The category victim is thus not only limited to the abducted person: "Victim means the disappeared person and any individual who has suffered harm as a direct result of an enforced disappearance." Hence the families of the disappeared persons are legally considered victims with specific rights granted as, for example, to know the truth about the circumstances of the abduction."

[45] Gobodo-Madikizela, *A Human Being Died That Night*. p.17.

[46] See Karl, "Rehumanizing The Disappeared." And, Karl, "Missing in Mexico."

the family but it is even more complex when the perpetrators manipulate and lie but still want to ask for forgiveness.[47] By denying their involvement the perpetrators deny the family their right to grieve and lay their loved one to rest in whatever funerary process possible. As Gobodo-Madikizela maintains, "Knowing the truth does not imply any promise of forgiveness on the part of the victim but it clears the way for the victim to "go on" with her or his life. Knowing what happened redefines ones trauma into language that can be understood."[48]

Gideon Nieuwoudt, the commanding officer who was one of the perpetrators responsible for the death of Siphiwo Mthimkulu, asked for an audience with the Mthimkulu family which was captured on the documentary by Kaplan that I explored in Chapter Two. Nieuwoudt asked Kaplan to arrange this audience so that he may implore the Mthimkulu family to forgive him for his part in the death of Siphiwo Mthimkulu. Unlike Eugene de Kock, who Gobodo-Madikizela believes to be authentic in his sincerity after having engaged with him in her interviews,[49] Nieuwoudt seems to be insincere and manipulative in his apology. His insincerity is especially evident considering the trauma he put the Mthimkulu family through during the TRC hearings when he asked the court to block Mrs. Mthimkulu from testifying about her son's torture, poisoning, and abduction. Nieuwoudt claims to be Christian but then seeks to insult the family by asking for forgiveness not because he is sorry but because they are Christian and he implies that being Christian infers an obligation to forgive. As Gobodo-Madikizela asserts, "Asking for forgiveness without an attempt to

[47] Mark Kaplan. *Between Joyce and Remembrance*, DVD, Johannesburg: SABC (Grey Matter Media and Bullfrog Films, 2004)
[48] Gobodo-Madikizela, "Remorse, Forgiveness, and Rehumanization" p.16.
[49] I am unsure of what the psychological measurement would be used by Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela in her assessment of sincerity that Eugene De Kock displayed other than his physical emotional state. When De Kock spoke of wanting to say sorry to Doreen Faku and Pearl Mgoduka, his eyes welled up, his voice broke, his hands trembled and his mouth quivered. p.32. Such emotions were not shown by Gideon Nieuwoudt at the Mthimkulu family home. When Nieuwoudt finally did reach out to say sorry, it was to Mark Kaplan which was then captured on Kaplan's rather than in private.

appreciate the other pain, without making a human connection with the other person, has an empty ring to it. It is tantamount to adding insult to injury."[50]

Nieuwoudt's attempt at asking forgiveness was a spectacular disaster and ended with Siphiwo Mthimkulu's son injuring him. Sikhumbuzo Mthimkulu's burst of anger at his father's killer understandably comes from a place of resentment and pain that represents a daily reminder of his father who he misses in a physical, emotional and psychological sense. As Gobodo-Madikizela articulates and which applies to victims who are living or their family if they are not, "Victims face daily the lived *memory* of their trauma."[51]

Jeffrey Benzien, a former security policeman who became infamous for showing the method of torture he used on victims at a TRC hearing, came face to face with some of his former victims and their questions. He did not take this opportunity to attempt at an authentic reconciliation but rather, as Mark Sanders and Antjie Krog articulated, reverted back to his manipulating ways. In reverting back to manipulating his former victims, Benzien denied Ashley Forbes, Tony Yengeni, Peter Jacobs, Gary Kruser and Bongani Jonas a concrete acknowledgement in their pursuit of rehumanisation. Benzien evokes the space of the everyday by recalling moments in which he showed his victims kindness so that he can humanise his role as a policeman 'just trying to do his job',

> 'A special relationship' is what Benzien says existed between him and Ashley Forbes. Forbes, biting his upper lip, tries to get Benzien to admit to acts which had clearly plunged him into months of hell, driving him to the point of suicide. Benzien: You remember especially because I think that the two of us, after weeks of your confinement, really became quite close… I may be mistaken, but I would say relatively good friends in a way… I assaulted you that first day… but then I took you on a trip…. And I'm not saying this flippantly… you said that it is the most Kentucky Fried Chicken you've ever ate… and then we went to the Western Transvaal where you pointed out arms caches… Do you remember the time when you saw snow for the first time… what happened in the snow next to the N1…and the trip to Colesberg, how you braaied with me? [52]

[50] Gobodo-Madikizela, "Remorse, Forgiveness, and Rehumanization", p.13.
[51] Gobodo-Madikizela, "Remorse, Forgiveness, and Rehumanization", p.15.
[52] Antjie Krog, *Country Of My Skull: Guilt, Sorrow, And The Limit Of Forgiveness* (New York: Random House, 1998), p. 111.

Mark Sanders who has written a chapter on forgiveness has analysed this very encounter of Benzien being questioned by his five victims and observes similarly that 'Yengeni and the others' are asking for more than just a set of admissions, they want Benzien to submit to them. These men who have been detained and tortured want to turn the tables around and interrogate Benzien in a vulnerable space where potentially what he says could have a negative impact on his amnesty application.

> Once the game is on, generally speaking he [Benzien] will not allow them to get the upper hand. But there are moments of another quality. We witness, first of all, instances when Benzien apologises, or asks for forgiveness for what he did. Referring to his killing of cadre Ashley Kriel in 1987, for which he is also applying for amnesty, and on which he will be questioned at the hearing, Benzien prefaces his testimony by reading out an apology. [53]

South African poet, writer and academic, Antjie Krog, who was at this specific hearing, records and analyses this spectacular moment of Benzien remembering and using everyday instances to gain control of the situation so that he is once again back in a position of power where he can manipulate and dehumanise his victims. However, Sanders quotes Gary Kruser, another of the victims accusing Benzien of remembering "flimsy things like [buying Ashley Forbes] Kentucky [Fried Chicken]"[54] while forgetting memories of his interrogation of them. Benzien recalls these mundane instances which are located in the everyday rather than the heroic and uses them as ammunition to fire at his victims to break down the defences that they had struggled to build up in the years subsequent to their torture. Benzien 'could not remember' and would only concede points based on its likeliness rather than actively acknowledging his impact on his victims.

Sanders notes that Benzien assumed he was being forgiven by his former victims because none of them directly opposed his amnesty application and it was this assumption that Sanders believes to be the reason Yengeni, Forbes, Kruser, Jacobs and Jonas wanted to

[53] Sanders, *Ambiguities of Witnessing*, p. 104 - 105.
[54] Sanders, *Ambiguities of Witnessing*, p. 107.

question Benzien. Furthermore, Sanders explicates, "the "truth" these men are after is no longer simply forensic… but a truth of their suffering that they want acknowledged by Benzien." [55] Yengeni and his compatriots asked Benzien their questions but as Sanders noted above, they were not asking for a 'forensic truth' but rather seeking to have their suffering acknowledged and as Gobodo-Madikizela quotes, "Acknowledgement of responsibility does not only clarify questions of fact. It also clarifies what the perpetrator wants to be forgiven. This enables the victim to make the choice whether to grant or deny forgiveness. It also helps to re-establish the victim's self-respect."[56]

As Gobodo-Madikizela and Sanders both indicate, forgiveness as a concept is already complicated in terms of what it means to forgive or to be forgiven and how forgiveness might be conveyed or measured especially when one looks at the role of forgiveness within the TRC.[57] As Sanders indicates, the term forgiveness did not appear in the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act and neither was it a prerequisite for amnesty to be given to perpetrators. "The act required from perpetrators no apology to victims and demanded from them no expression of remorse. And it certainly did not require victims to forgive perpetrators."[58] However, despite not legally being a requirement, it was still an important aspect of the TRC amnesty process with many perpetrators asking for forgiveness from their victims and/or the victim's family members. Of course asking for forgiveness creates a perception of guilt and regret but as mentioned above there is no technical way of measuring how authentic perpetrators are in their request. Certainly despite perpetrators not being required to be apologetic for their actions, they were being assessed by members of the TRC and by society which meant that whether they were sincere or not, asking for forgiveness and being apologetic could only add to their case.

[55] Sanders, *Ambiguities of Witnessing*, p. 107.
[56] Gobodo-Madikizela, "Remorse, Forgiveness, and Rehumanization", p.16.
[57] Sanders, *Ambiguities of Witnessing*, p. 93.
[58] Sanders, *Ambiguities of Witnessing*, p. 93.

With regards to perpetrators such as Eugene De Kock where Gobodo-Madikizela suggests there seems to be a genuine regret on his side for the deaths that he caused, it allows us to consider forgiveness from the perspective of the victim. When perpetrators acknowledge their deeds, they are acknowledging the pain and the trauma they cause(d) the family. More importantly, perpetrators are finally acknowledging the victim as a person rather than a political target identified as an object that needed to be eliminated. As Gobodo-Madikizela asserts, "Seeing the other as a human being, feeling and responding to the other's pain with remorse, is probably the most crucial starting point in the encounter between victims and perpetrators of evil."[59] This change in perception from object to human that the perpetrator undergoes when confronted with either the grieving family or the victim(s) is an astonishing process which is filled with a huge emotional burden that both parties need to address so that the multifaceted process for rehumanisation can be fully navigated.

The everyday is seen when that acknowledgement by perpetrators shows an understanding of the person they abducted, tortured, killed etc. that the victims were not "other". It is this transformative process which sees the perpetrator as no longer seeing the victim as 'other' but rather as human that locates us within the everyday. By acknowledging the humanness of activists, it starts the reversal of the dehumanisation to the process of rehumanization. Acknowledgement is an important aspect of the identification of an activist as some*one* rather than some*thing*. Someone who can be identified by their links to the very "same world" that the perpetrator resides in and was trying to protect. As Gobodo-Madikizela posits, "The perpetrator cannot undo the deed, but his or her acknowledgment, contrition, and recognition of the victim's pain can go a long way in contributing to the victim's journey

[59] Gobodo-Madikizela, "Remorse, Forgiveness, and Rehumanization", p.20.

towards mastery of the traumatic memory."[60] The rippling effects of missingness and dehumanisation are felt further than the acts themselves; it becomes part of the everyday.

Conclusion:

Acknowledging the memory and representation

As I have argued throughout this chapter, rehumanisation is a complicated and multifaceted process that can be and should be performed in a multitude of ways as needed by the activists, families and communities. The complexity of rehumanisation becomes doubly visible when one considers the impact of rehumanising activists either through symbolic burials if they were disappeared or through political funerals if their remains were found. The process of dealing with the remains of an activist becomes further complicated, as I have analysed above, when physically interacting with the remains and including families in the rehumanisation process as MPTT do because of the various ethical issues.

Similarly, when political parties become invested in the political afterlife of their activists, although almost always welcomed by the family and community, it displaces the ordinary life and the personhood that should be included. Rehumanisation again becomes problematised when considering activists that survived their detention and torture and are not given the tools and resources to deal with having been dehumanised within their everyday. Certainly biography in its various forms plays a large part of the rehumanisation process as we have seen in the narratives of Siphiwo Mthimkulu, Nokuthula Simelane, Zubeida Jaffer and the lives of other activists that have been mentioned.

These various forms of rehumanisation that I have explored are not always performed concurrently or sometimes even at all and yet they are all equally important in their respective areas. Indeed, it is these processes of rehumanisation that allow families, friends

[60] Gobodo-Madikizela, "Remorse, Forgiveness, and Rehumanization", p.24.
Jaffer suffered a mental breakdown and was extremely vulnerable at one point in her life. Fortunately, she was able to manage her mental health to the point of recovery, but she realises that the person she was before her political activism will never return.

and loved ones to identify and claim heroic figures for who they are rather than what they are and to acknowledge the memory and representation of the activist.

Conclusion:

Throughout this mini thesis I have discussed the everyday as a notion, a theme, a narrative, and as various other terms so that I may show its ambiguity and fluidity. Universally, the everyday is a space for repetitive motions to be enacted, the mundane rituals of life that all individuals are susceptible to performing. As Highmore and others have posited, the everyday is indefinite and indefinable, as such, it has the ability to traverse different realms and integrate itself into various spaces.[1] The everyday has this ability to integrate and traverse because it is the primary foundation from which other concepts arise and can be developed further. However, despite its significance, both within other concepts and in the lives of all individuals, the everyday is mostly associated with things mundane and repetitive.

Indeed, the home is one such space that is located within the everyday that is seen not only as something to leave behind in search for transcendence, but it is also stereotypically linked to women. As I have attempted to make visible in Chapter One, the everyday is not simply something that one can transcend. When one understands that the organisation of daily life is by repetition, and it is the act of repetition by which humans orientate and define themselves, then it is possible to see that the everyday while not only significant, is also essential. Certainly, the heroic life which has always been demonstrated as specifically needing to transcend the everyday in order to function is, as I have argued throughout this mini-thesis, unable to separate itself from the everyday.

I maintain that the heroic narrative is not a space that is separated and elevated above the everyday but that both of these ambiguous spaces are intertwined. There is an intersectionality that sees the everyday infiltrate into the heroic by the very human nature of

[1] See, Grunebaum, *Memorializing the Past*, p. 118 -121; Felski. "The Invention.", p.16; Highmore, *The everyday life reader*, p.1; De Certeau *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p. xxiv.

familiarising oneself with ones' surroundings. Activists who had left their home and gone into exile were not exempt from the everyday pervading this or any other environment through the routine that many conducted in safe houses or base camps. Many individuals, Zubeida Jaffer and Siphiwo Mthimkulu included, had access to banned books which they read. Many activists took the opportunity during exile to be educated and would gather with their like-minded comrades in order to debate and reassure each other that change was coming. As I have stated in chapter three, it is the gathering of ordinary people into a like-minded space that enables the everyday to transform. Felski has stated that every life ultimately contains an element of the ordinary and that we are all anchored within the mundane even when located in the heroic.[2]

The heroic life that I have explored is located within the South African liberation struggle movement which saw various activists put their lives in danger to fight for the freedom for their families, friends and community. More than that, I have demonstrated how the political parties of the time have since used the narratives of activists to represent their political ideals. The African National Congress (ANC), who are the current ruling party, have consolidated the South African national narrative as their own by memorializing many of its members who died for the cause. The agency of activists who have been conscripted is used to legitimate what is regarded as the new socio-political order. This conscription seems to be selective in its process of individuals who are elevated to the heroic narrative. Of course, one may be heroic in action and even have a heroic narrative but it does not guarantee that one will be included and recognised by the state or the nation.

The glaring shortcoming within the heroic narrative that I have noted in all three of my chapters, is the failure to include a personhood of the narrative that acknowledges the sacrifices activists made whether or not they died heroically. Furthermore, that the activist

[2] Felski, "The Invention." p.16.

and their lives are acknowledged even if they were not heroic because the heroic narrative is not as straight forward as it seems when one is faced with detention, interrogation, torture and manipulation as indicated by Dlamini in his work. Some activists who turned into traitors had families to protect, some individuals had self-preservation and some wanted to be financially secure. Each activist that turned had their own reason but it does not excuse their actions when they were asked to eliminate their captives.[3]

This inscription of the activist as the hero or not at all is partly why I had looked into the everyday because it seemed to be disingenuous to only acknowledge one type of activist and is what I have argued is a type of dehumanisation. Certainly, it is a dehumanisation of the person whose everyday led them to taking part in the resistance to Apartheid in their aim to change their everyday, perhaps even what Karl asserts is a re-de-humanisation.[4] Each individual has their own everyday, an everyday that is particular to their own circumstances and which is why I have reiterated Highmore's question, "whose everyday?'[5]

Unfortunately, as I have shown throughout this mini-thesis, it is a shortcoming of the idealised heroic life that its inaugurated heroes are perpetuated as mythical and archetypal to the point that the heroic narrative is mostly a generic construction of an unattainable status. To a large extent, the heroic narrative is a masculine based representation that dismisses the complex personhood attached to a hero. Furthermore, the heroic narrative as it is maintained does not necessarily recognise the role that the everyday and the home played in the liberation struggle by providing safe homes or meeting spaces for comrades in the struggle to come together. It is important to recognise the politically gendered space in South Africa that caters towards masculine activists to the point that the TRC Special Hearing for Women needed to be created. The personhood of many South African activists was silenced either in

[3] Dlamini. *Askari*.
[4] Karl, "Rehumanizing the disappeared", p. 727
[5] Highmore, *The Everyday Life Reader*, p. 1

favour of being rooted into the national narrative so that they may be recovered as members of the nation and not as a person or because they were categorically excluded by the TRC's mandate.

I have put forward that the heroic narrative not only overshadowed the personhood of activists but also the larger narrative of structural violence which Njabulo Ndebele terms the "horror of day-to-day" life under apartheid.[6] He posits that, "the horror of day-to-day life under apartheid often outdid the efforts of the imagination to reduce it to metaphor."[7] What started out as an attempt by the TRC to uncover the truth so that South Africans may come to terms with their past through a national narrative of truth, justice and reconciliation appears to have turned into commemorating heroes within a particular heroic script. These politically endorsed processes of repatriation and reburials in South Africa memorialise the heroic while simultaneously peripheralising many other histories and biographies which have not been located within the heroic narrative.

As I have shown throughout this mini-thesis, the narratives of Zubeida Jaffer, Nokuthula Simelane and Siphiwo Mthimkulu have thus been invaluable because of their ability to traverse both the complex and contested spaces of the everyday and heroic narratives. Their various biographical material, documentaries, media reports and interviews have been important in what I have suggested be regarded as a process of rehumanisation. Jaffer's auto/biography specifically has made a conscious effort to not dismiss her identities and has stated that she is not prepared to only be identified 'as one thing only'.[8] These identities are extensions of her voice that amplify her sacrifice, suffering and heroism which ultimately enhances her biography but also makes visible and translates the effects and long

[6] Ndebele, "Memory", p19.
[7] Ndebele, "Memory", p19.
[8] Steirn, *21 Icons.*

term impacts that Apartheid had on the lives of the many individuals and communities that were oppressed.

Certainly, the personhood of Simelane and Mthimkulu are not as easily found as that of Jaffer who produced much of her own biographical material. Producing the biography of someone when they are no longer alive is understandably complex, the personhood in such an instance then seems to be assembled through the various components of recollections from family, friends, comrades, and even perpetrators in the TRC hearings. In some cases, where remains have been found, they can be analysed to show what Clyde Snow calls the osteobiography, the history of a life lived through the materiality of bones.[9] These recollections in addition to the media reports, the few remaining photographs and respective documentaries - *Betrayal* and *Between Joyce and Remembrance* [10] build up the biographies of Simelane and Mthimkulu respectively. Kaplan's portrayal of each activist delves into both their personal and political lives and shows the complexity of an individual's personhood when it is interpreted paraphrased through the lens of their representative(s).

Betrayal thus makes evident a family's journey of pain and suffering as they continue their search for the truth of Nokuthula Simelane's disappearance. This documentary is more than just a depiction of Simelane's life as an MK cadre. Kaplan provides a balance by allowing Simelane's family members to recall their time with her. Simelane's sister Thembi Nkadimeng started the court case against her sister's perpetrators in hope of finding out more information, named her daughter Nokuthula, in memory of her sister. Simelane's mother has very few photographs of her eldest daughter but they are pictured prominently in the documentary as the audience is regaled with memories of Simelane's life as she grew up and the type of child she was. Kaplan's documentary brings together the pieces of Simelane's life

[9] Cited in Keenan and Weizman, *Mengele's Skull,* p.18.
[10] Kaplan, *Between Joyce and Remembrance*; Kaplan, *Betrayal*.

and frames it in a way that recognises that there is more to Simelane than the life she lived as an activist and includes the life she led leading up to her activism.

Although Simelane's narrative is similar to that of Mthimkulu, I argue that it is tailored to the masculine based heroic narrative so that she might be inducted on her own right. However, despite being represented by her father at the TRC hearings, Simelane's political biography, which is based on the information from her TRC hearings, has mostly been constructed by the various accounts of her perpetrators retelling their version of her last days within captivity and the torture she suffered. Conversely, Mthimkulu's narrative as a male activist was based in the heroic and was given the ultimate heroic burial with the then-president Jacob Zuma having given a speech at the funeral ceremony.[11]

The heroic narrative of Mthimkulu which was acknowledged by the state to the extent that it was, was something that many families expected for their loved ones.[12] This expectation was to a large extent not always met for the families and as I have argued in Chapter Two. It is problematic because of the mythical and unattainable standards that are set and perpetuated. The state itself is also responsible if not accountable for the particular grand narrative of the nation and the liberation movement which is prescribed for activists who are recovered with the purpose of reinserting them into the narrative of the nation. As I have made visible above, activists are then reclaimed as members of the nation with an almost singular narrative and to use the term from Heidi Grunebaum, an "erasure" of them individuals.[13] I have suggested that the activity of recovering members within the nation

[11] "Address by President Jacob Zuma at the reburial of the Pebco 3 and Cosas 2" (03 October 2009). https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/address-president-jacob-zuma-reburial-pebco-3-and-cosas-2 (Accessed 24 February 2020).
[12] As I have mentioned above and which Jay Aronson has discussed in depth, the Mamelodi Four mothers were disappointed by the ceremony and lack of state acknowledgement to the point that they worked with the Mamelodi Ten mothers to ensure a state acknowledged funeral.
[13] Grunebaum, *Memorializing the Past*, p. 114.

should be seen as a recommitting to missingness, in line with Sylvia Karl's argument on dehumanisation.[14]

Mthimkulu's narrative does fall into the archetypal heroic category but as Featherstone has stated and which I wish to reiterate, does not mean that the life leading up to his activism should be disregarded. Mthimkulu was not seen as an activist by his parents and as I have noted in Chapter Two, they did not approve of his involvement and had asked him to stop his activism. Incidentally his parents asked him to stop after being released from detention and taken to the hospital due to the torture and poisoning that almost ended his life. A I have made evident, Mthimkulu refused to give up the struggle despite the already high cost that he had suffered. This conviction and commitment to the struggle is what makes him the 'ideal' individual to be appropriated into the heroic narrative, we might even consider this narrative as one of the ones that perpetuate the heroic standard. However, Mthimkulu's narrative is more than just as an activist that died for his country, the recollections in *Between Joyce and Remembrance* makes that apparent by revealing details of his personal life and his childhood so as to keep his memory alive.

Mthimkulu's narrative, although it has in some measure been expanded by the documentary, makes visible the need for activists to be allowed a heroic narrative that incorporates their personhood and biography into a more multidimensional narrative. Certainly activists should be entitled to a biography that assists in the process that re-humanises the individual. The crossover between the everyday and the heroic, I have argued, is through rehumanisation. Certainly the narratives of all three of the activists show the benefits and the need for rehumanisation due to the various ways that they were dehumanised by the security police. Jaffer, who suffered a mental breakdown, was told that she needed to heal her mind by her psychologist. Jaffer was responsible for rehumanising herself and it was

[14] Karl, "Rehumanizing the disappeared", p. 742.

in her daily life that her process became visible.

In Chapter Three I argue that the process of rehumanisation is complex because it needs to take into account how one was dehumanised in order to attempt a reversal of this process. The term rehumanisation itself is complex and should be understood as a multifaceted process with various possibilities for an individual to be rehumanised in order to be reclaimed by the family and or the victim(s). Much of the behaviour that the larger society was oppressed by, reinforced and perpetuated an othering that was normalised into the daily societal routine that was upheld by the beneficiaries of Apartheid and even by those it oppressed. One of the components I have suggested is necessary for rehumanisation to take place or to start taking place is perception, a notion that I acquired from the Oelofsen's work.[15] Dehumanisation is partly based on one's perception of another but as I have established perception can be reconstructed and transformed to recognise the propaganda that was fuelled by Apartheid laws and widely held 'beliefs'.

Through my research into rehumanisation I was aware of the methods of physical and psychological torture that perpetrators inflicted on their victims in an attempt to discover information. As I continued to look into this and consider the torture that activists were put through I started to recognise the impact that this had on the activists in the long run if they were released after their detention and indeed even if they were not. I therefore started to consider the lasting psychological and possibly physical impact that a perpetrator leaves on their victims and in their life. As a result, Chapter Three has argued that because of these lasting effects that are needed to be dealt with by either the victim or their family members, the dehumanisation committed by perpetrators regrettably makes them a key element in the process of rehumanisation.

Pumla Gobodo- Madikizela makes the above visible through her interviews with

[15] Oelofsen, "De- and rehumanization", p. 179.

Eugene De Kock. Those interviews show how De Kock regrets his involvement and indeed his responsibility for the death of his victims. De Kock seems to have become aware of the moral implications of his unethical behaviour that he committed under Apartheid and as a result recognises his victims as humans and through his interaction with family members of his victims recognises their humanness. Thus as I have suggested, perception can be used to reverse this process of normalisation of unethical and racist behaviour. In other words, the individuals and society that had been previously perceived as non-human beings, and are now perceived as human, reinforces the perception of them as human. Rehumanisation I argue is a particular process that requires the person to be acknowledged, identified and claimed in relation to Jenny Edkins concept of personhood which considers *who* they are rather that *what* they are.[16]

As I have established throughout my research in the chapters above and Chapter Three specifically, part of rehumanisation is to ask who is being rehumanised? If we ask this question as I have, then it stands to reason that we should also ask whether the individual *is human* and whether an individual is allowed to *be human* with all the flaws and facets of what it means to be human.[17] These questions along with the question of missingness have guided me in my exploration and research as I have looked at the everyday and the heroic narratives that activists are placed with.

Certainly I had hoped to consider the question of missingness to a larger extent but I believe that my analysis of missingness as a concept that is more than a physical absence has been made visible in a subtler fashion. I believe that this visibility of missingness is evident when looking at the need to re-humanise the narrative of activists who have been dehumanised by their perpetrators, made missing in the everyday despite physical markers or

[16] Edkins. *Missing*.
[17] Thomas Keenan, "Getting the dead to tell me what happened: Justice, prosopopoeia, and forensic afterlives" in *Forensic Architecture (Project), Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014).

who have been appropriated by the state into constructing the grander national heroic narrative. These processes miss the 'person as such' in the everyday by focusing on their political status, which, although a key element, is only one part of their personhood.

The narratives of Zubeida Jaffer, Nokuthula Simelane and Siphiwo Mthimkulu have played a central role in my research because of what I deem to be their ability to traverse the everyday and the heroic life. Their narratives have enabled me to show how on its own, the heroic narrative displaces the everyday and the personhood that should be included when looking at an activist's biography. An essential part of biography and of personhood is recognising the multifaceted and complex identities that are available to activists just as they are available to any other individual. I believe that this mini thesis helps to acknowledge that an activist's heroic narrative will not be diminished but rather enhanced by a "historical reflection which allows and enables guerrilla's to be human beings as well."[18] Indeed, the various forms that make up a biography of an individual performs a key element of the rehumanisation process which I have attempted to make evident in the narratives of Mthimkulu, Simelane, Jaffer and the lives of other activists whose narratives I have also interacted with.

Although this mini thesis has attempted to extend the heroic narrative to show its inclusion within the everyday, I believe that there are still further contributions that can be made to this field through looking at notions of time, memory and forgiveness which I touched on but unfortunately did not have the space to accurately unpack. I would therefore like to reiterate my disposition from Chapter Two which states that hopefully, the need for heroic narratives that are specifically gendered within political and nationalist discourses will diminish over time and adapt to cope with a more realistic and accommodating account that incorporates a renegotiated heroic narrative.

[18] McKaiser with Fullard "Digging up the Truth about Missing Persons" – Podcast.

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