Making sense of place and the role of migrant media:
a South African migrant radio case study

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Migrants relate homesickness to a physical place

I miss the smell of the food and the noise of the traffic.
Indian man, from Mumbai

I miss seeing the mountains when I open the curtains in the morning.
Parsi woman, from North India

I miss Burundi, I want to go back home.
19 year Burundian woman, from refugee camp
A sense of place is defined as an emotional, physical and social identity with a place, in which particular people create a sense of belonging through communication, community, culture and routine. (Adams, 2009; Dürr, 2011 & Howley, 2008)

Migrants lose their sense of place (Howley; 2008)
Components of sense of place

Sense of place includes:

- Individual identity
- Collective identity
- Physical, emotional and social identity
- Experience of, and in, physical location
- Communication practices
- Community
- Social networks
- Emotional networks
- Routine

(Adams, 2009; Howley, 2008)
SANZ Live

2 Directors, 4 regular DJs, Volunteers
Facebook, Website
PlanetFM 94.6

Auckland community radio station
38 languages

Caspi & Elias (2010) Prerequisite community media:
Media produced by members of the group for the group
The South African migration

South Africa: Ethnicity

- **African**: 79.2
- **White**: 8.9
- **Coloured**: 8.9
- **Indian**: 2.5
- **Other**: 0.5

9 main Bantu language groups

- **Afrikaans or English**

Afrikaans or English

- **Christian or Muslim**

Christian (25%), Muslim (25%)

English, Hindu (50%), Muslim (25%), Christian (25%)

South Africa’s population (2015) retrieved from http://www.southafrica.info/about/people/population.htm#.VYXn8vmqgko
South Africans in New Zealand

54 279 South Africans in New Zealand, 2013
2013 Quickstats about culture and ethnicity, Statistics New Zealand, n.d.)

Just over 50% of them lived in Auckland
(Walrond, 2014)

“Invisible”
Overlooked in academic studies
Skilled migrants: culturally: Western
Appearance: Similarities with other groups in NZ
(Trlin, 2012)
Valuable tool for ethnic minorities to regain sense of place
(Howley, 2008)

Radio remains valuable, plays significant role:
- Cheap
- Easily accessible
- Supports identity making
- Part of culture and routine of home

(Browne, 2005; Caspi & Elias, 2011; Fairchild, 2009;
Howley, 2008; Matsaganis, Katz & Ball-Rokeach, 2011;
Pietikäinen & Dufva, 2006)
The study: Community media, in particular radio

Case study methodology
Representativeness difficult to prove (Babbie, 2008)
Validity? Reservations considered (Johanssen, 2003; Flavbjerg, 2006; Mariotto, Pinto Zanni & De Moraes, 2014)

Qualitative interviews with Directors, DJs

Convenience sampling:
11 participants
In-depth interviews
Quantitative communication ecology questionnaire

Content Analysis of 8 radio broadcasts
Expressions of alienation on arrival

Getting off the plane I felt unwelcome; one of the custom guys were very nasty to me.

When I walked in the mall the first time, I felt everything closing down around me, I felt foreign, I felt lost, everything is totally foreign.

We knew no one in Auckland, it was hard.

It was hard taking my children away from their grandmother.

Your new friends will never be the friend that was at your wedding, that was at your child’s christening, you will never have the friends you had in South Africa.

(Different interviewees)
Kiwis are different.
Other South Africans ‘speak the same language’.
I don’t have to explain my jokes.
We think the same.
People know your name.

I want other friends, but I want my South African friends.

I make an effort to get to know non-South Africans, but not South Africans; I know I will meet them through SANZ Live.

I see more of my non-South African friends, because we live close to one another and we work together, but my South African friends are different, more like family.

When I go to SANZ Live events, it is like a family reunion.

(Different interviewees)
SANZ Live activities

Radio broadcasts:
Music and topics

Events:
- Artists from South Africa
- Group reservations and sport events
- Club nights – music and dancing
- Black tie – once a year, very formal, jazz artists from SA
- Braai Day

Community work: SA and NZ
Music as mobile form of ethnic identity

“Music is a metaphor for identity”  (Frith, 1996, p109)

Dance

- enlivens a situation
- shared memories from home
- specific example of communication in a physical place
- face-to-face communication
- local socialisation
- Mobile form of ethnic identity
- Trans-national communication, not confined by borders
- Mechanism for bringing together members of an ethnic identity when specific genre of music is played outside of its natural geographic location  
  (Adams, 2009 & Frith, 1996)
### SANZ Live music choice

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Jazz, Soul, R&B – preferred genre
Played during broadcasts, Black Tie, Club nights – sell outs!!!
Dancing: the bob and ‘langarm’
Migrant need: retain cultural traditions (Wong, 2012)

Heritage Day / Braai Day
21 September – less political than Freedom Day

Idea originated from Bishop Desmond Tutu
Government commissioner now in charge
Has become a type of symbol of togetherness in the “new South Africa”
People come together and ‘braai’
Braai Day: The smell of wood fires reminds me of home

Open Fires at Braai day
Top: a wood fire being in a 45l gallon drum and meat on a grid (‘konka’) (Author photo)
Left: 2013 a “Potjie” competition (iron pot) Facebook with permission
Braai Day: I loved the Boeresport!

Top left: Boy’s egg and spoon race
Bottom left: Women’s sack race with jumping castle in the background
Top right: Men’s tug of war
Author photos
We are all South African Kiwis now, but we celebrate our South African Kiwiness [at Braai Day].

When we went there [Braai Day] it was more Coloured people and English speaking Coloured people. I do think that South Africans are so diverse and the Coloured community play a big role in our psyche of being South African ... and you sort of miss that diversity ... the minstrel bands and the specific dishes ... and .... their specific Cape Coloured accent, so it was sort of reassuring to know that they are around and where you can go to get that food and dishes ... (Participant 3)

I loved the Afrikaans at Barry Hilton. (Participant 1)

Through my volunteer work I got to know many different South Africans that I never met in South Africa. (Participant 9)

It does not matter what race you are anymore, in Auckland we are just South Africans. SANZ Live is for all South Africans. (Director 2)
2 Saturdays before Christmas: gifts and breakfast for Ronald MacDonald House.

(Image from SANZ Live Facebook, with permission)
Community support: South Africa

Far left: The Facebook announcement of the Xenophobia focused broadcast on 25 April. Left: logo of The Trauma Centre Above: The invitation and announcement of the Mother’s Day lunch in aid of the Trauma Centre From SANZ Live Facebook – with permission
SANZ Live success: sense of place

Create new routine
Network facilitator
Social identity
Assisted to build new identity/hybrid identity
“there is no going ‘home’ again”

Expressed pleasure of participants to mix with South Africans from other ethnicities.

Is “Nation building” continuing outside of South Africa?
Further research

Representative of SANZ Live
Not representative of SA demography
2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} generation migrants
Comparison with role of other Planet FM radio programmes

Big issue: To do a meta study of South Africans difficult
No requirement for migrants to state South African ethnicity
Picture reference list

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