REFERENCES


Pretorius, C. and J. Steadman (2017). Barriers and Facilitators to Caring for a Child with Cerebral Palsy in Rural Communities of the Western Cape, South Africa. *Child Care in Practice*: 1-18.


Seekings, J. (2010). *Race, Class and Inequality in the South African City*. Cape Town, Center for Social Science Research.


ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Elise Jantine van der Mark (1982) is a Dutch born and raised social scientist. Since childhood, she has professed a love and fascination for all things related to Africa. After completing her A levels, she traveled through ten African countries, being only 18 years old. She went on to study Visual Marketing (with a specialization in marketing of social organizations) at the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences while simultaneously pursuing a Bachelor’s degree in Cultural Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam. In view of her bachelor thesis for Visual Marketing (conducted in Zimbabwe), she was offered temporary employment in capacity building of social organizations in Zimbabwe. In 2007, she therefore paused her bachelor in Cultural Anthropology and moved to Zimbabwe. She trained local artists in business and project management in order to set up three socially-engaged arts organizations in visual arts, performing arts and photography. She returned to the Netherlands, inspired to help spread the word about the richness of Zimbabwean art and culture. She published a book called *Avocados and Shona* about her experiences in Zimbabwe and set up an art exhibition of critical Zimbabwean art in Haarlem, the Netherlands. At the same time, she continued her bachelor in Cultural Anthropology and chose a specialization in the anthropology of development. She was aiming to work for an international non-governmental development organization one day. However, severe health issues put a hold on Elise’s career for several years. Eventually, this made her decide to pursue a Master’s degree in International Development Studies to make the most out of her rehabilitation period. She conducted her Master research, again, in Zimbabwe and graduated cum laude in 2012.

After two years of taking up temporary assignments as a self-employed consultant, Elise and her partner Roger decided to quit their jobs and move to Cape Town, South Africa. While searching for employment opportunities, Elise applied for and was granted an Erasmus Mundus scholarship of the European Union to conduct a PhD research in Cape Town. She was hosted as a visiting PhD fellow at the University of the Western Cape in conjunction with the VU University Amsterdam as her home-institution. This research was a perfect combination of the most important professional goals for Elise, namely contributing to social change, making research practically applicable and working in close collaboration with local participants as experiential experts. In 2017, Elise and her partner moved back to the Netherlands. After taking a year off to carry and give birth to twins, Elise finished her doctoral thesis at the VU University Amsterdam; hence this book.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
To be able to write this dissertation has been one of my long-held wishes coming true. I am extremely fortunate that I was not only granted this opportunity by the European Union, but also blessed with tremendous guidance, support and encouragement from so many people throughout the process. I would like to mention some of them, but not before I first and foremost extend my deepest gratitude to all the participating mothers, grandmothers, sisters, and aunts from Zimbabwe and South Africa.

My dearest ‘mommas’ (as we would affectionately call each other), I am enormously humbled by your willingness to grant me access to your lives, share with me your deepest thoughts and emotions, and take this uncertain action journey with me. You offered me unfailing hospitality, kindness and generosity which shaped the research profoundly and touched me deeply on a personal level. *Masvita / Enkosi!*

I am indebted to my inspiring supervisory team. Prof Jacqueline Broerse, for taking a chance with me when I approached you out of the blue from Cape Town, and for your warm-hearted support throughout my many health issues. Academically, you have challenged me continuously to improve my critical thinking and writing skills. I have thoroughly enjoyed our discussions and appreciate how you have helped slowly build my professional confidence. Dr Ina Conradie, you probably do not realize how important you have been to me, both professionally and personally. Thank you so much for warmly welcoming me at UWC as your first PhD-candidate to supervise. For accompanying me to Khayelitsha many times, introducing me to all the right people, and educating me on Xhosa and Afrikaans culture. But also, for our countless theoretical, methodological discussions which highly stimulated my passion for research. You inspired me to always keep in mind the social relevance of research. Dr Christine Dedding, I am so grateful for you teaching me all the ins and outs of PAR, and challenging me to never approach and describe mothers as victims of circumstances, but rather emphasize their agency and seek true participation. This has strengthened my research profoundly. Dr Teun Zuiderent-Jerak, I sincerely appreciate that you were willing to join my supervisory team towards the end of my PhD. Your fresh perspective proved invaluable and your critical feedback has greatly enriched my dissertation. Thank you for encouraging me to set my own course!
I would like to give special thanks to my co-author and former supervisor Dr Hebe Verrest for being so invested in my professional and personal development. You assisted me in publishing my first article, encouraged me to write a scholarship application for Erasmus Mundus, and shared with me your experiences with combining work and family. I really enjoyed having you over in Cape Town!

Prof Max Bergman, Prof Marcus Power, Prof Julian May and Dr Judith McKenzie, thank you for your invaluable feedback on several drafts of my published articles. I highly appreciate your support!

I am also grateful to the members of the promotion commission for taking valuable time out to read and assess my dissertation.

My research assistants, translators and editors in Zimbabwe, South Africa and the Netherlands, I owe you my gratitude for helping me set up, work through, and finish this research: Silibaziso Mguni, Juliana Chiteka, Nosiphiwo Ngova, Lihle Ningiza, Sivuyile Damane, Nondumiso Twaisa, Nonopha Mavumengwana, Divya Nadkarni, Deborah Eade and Louise Hamlyn. Staff of Sibongile, DICAG and S4S, thank you for your time and effort!

My dear friends, Leon and Merel, thank you so much for so enthusiastically accepting my request to be my paranimfs, even though you both had no idea what it was! Merel, your creativity knows no bounds. Your designs have brought to life my conceptual thinking and research results. Furthermore, you have so beautifully and patiently designed my cover, chapters and invitations exactly as per my brief. But most of all, thank you for being such a wonderful friend!

Leon, I cannot thank you enough for always being by my side, ever since we were 2 years old. We have shared and seen it all together. You have so gracefully supported me in all my international endeavors, and consistently kept in touch over Skype, inquiring about life and research in Mutare and Cape Town. You have a special place in my heart…

Bolutife, thank you for livening up my experience at the University of the Western Cape, patiently answering all my questions and being there for me when times were hard.

Sonja, my woman soulmate, you have no idea how you shaped my life in Cape Town, and how you have changed my perspective on life, love and friendship.
Mandy, thank you for helping me to keep my physical health up to par during this roller coaster PhD. Without you, it would have taken me years and years to finish. I am proud to call you my friend.

Karlijn, I am indebted to you for being my bestie, for ‘getting’ me, for accepting me as I am and for supporting me unconditionally.

Jantine, Fem en Laris, thanks so much for keeping me grounded, reminding me what life is actually about when I am caught up in theoretical, abstract thought, for welcoming me back with open arms after three years in South Africa, and for passionately sharing in life’s biggest event: becoming a mom of twins.

Anita, Loïs, Nicchelle, Caïsa en Nadège, I really appreciate all those days of babysitting in order for me to finish this book.

Last but not least, my family. I extend my deepest gratitude to my parents for always, always having my back. Your support in spirit, kind and effort has been extraordinary and crucial so many times. Without your unfailing trust and encouragement, I would have never come this far.

Dad, I am so thankful you instilled in me an insatiable desire for knowledge, learning, analysis and understanding and a passion to make the world a slightly better place.

Mom, thank you for being my number one person to confide in, and for encouraging me to listen to, care for and love all people indiscriminately, just like your mother taught you.

Ebe and Jurre, my brothers, thanks for being my silent supporters, always. All three of us are absolutely unique. Just like everyone else ;-) 

Luka, thank you for reminding me I needed to look after myself too in this process. I miss you dearly.

And finally, my treasured three:
Roger, my love, I am so thankful for you encouraging me years ago to pursue a Master’s degree (look at the results!), assisting me in endless ways with my fieldwork, and critically guiding me in the writing process. You have unknowingly become a master in women empowerment and relational wellbeing! But most of all, my heart is full of gratitude for you believing in me when I didn’t, looking after my health when I wasn’t, and for loving me always. Forever yours…

And Thamin and Eane, my two little munchkins, thank you for brightening up my world, every single day.

Hora est!