

The background is a dark purple gradient. It is decorated with various geometric shapes and patterns: a large dark blue circle in the center containing the title; a pink circle with diagonal stripes on the left; a blue circle with horizontal stripes on the right; a blue circle with a dot pattern at the bottom left; a yellow triangle at the bottom center; a pink pentagon at the bottom right; a yellow triangle at the top left; a pink triangle at the top right; a blue circle at the top right; and several dashed lines in blue, yellow, and pink forming various shapes like circles and triangles.

# A Question of Power: Identity and Nationalism

By Adena Adams



“

I don't like exclusive brotherhoods for black people only. . . I've got my concentration elsewhere. . . . It's on mankind in general, and black people fit in there, not as special freaks and oddities outside the scheme of things, with labels like Black Power or any other rubbish of that kind. . . . Any heaven, like a Black Power heaven, that existed for a few individuals alone was pointless and useless. It was an urge to throttle everyone else to death. (132–33)



1.

# Biracial Ambiguity

How does Elizabeth's biracial identity affect how she interprets Black Nationalism in South Africa?



# A Question of Power in Context



Head became active in politics in the 1960's and joined the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). In 1964 Head fled with her son to Botswana, a neighboring country not under apartheid.



Bessie Amelia Head was born at Fort Napier Mental Institution in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, the asylum her mother was committed to at the time.

She lived in the village of Serowe as an refugee and became a schoolteacher. The traumas of exile resulted in a nervous breakdown. Afterwards, Head later wrote *A Question of Power*

# Racial Categories

White Afrikaners



“Coloured”



Black South Africans





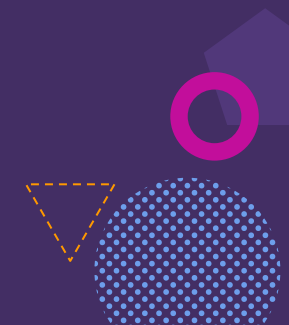
Elizabeth is in a unique position to comment on the nature of exclusionary social groups due to her “coloured” identity



2.

# Black Nationalism & Masculinity

How does gender affect Head's relationship with Black Nationalism?



# Black Nationalism

Black Nationalism takes the form of Medusa and Dan who spout rhetoric of racial oppression are depicted as excessive fanatical and divisive black nationalists.

Dan has a “leprosy like fear of Coloureds or half-breeds” in which he is afraid they will “contaminate his dark skin” (Head 27)



# Black Masculinity

Head critiques the patriarchy and racialism of the Black Consciousness Movement and related Black nationalisms that depended upon the subject of the citizen as implicitly black and masculine.

Dan as being “[extremely] masculine” (Head 105) with a permanently erect penis represents male egotism and problematic African male nationalism



3.

# Utopian Garden

How does the introduction of the community garden shift the narrative?





The garden is a space of cross cultural planting  
where many people from different nations come  
together to resolve the divisive ideologies of  
their places of origin

## Differences

Because the volunteers are all from different backgrounds conflict arises--

There are individuals who are annoying and elitist, such as the racist Danish woman, Camilla: “Camilla had to be included even though she was a pain in the blessed neck” (Head 73), and the rigid and pious Quaker.

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# Thanks!

**Any questions?**

You can find me at @username & user@mail.me

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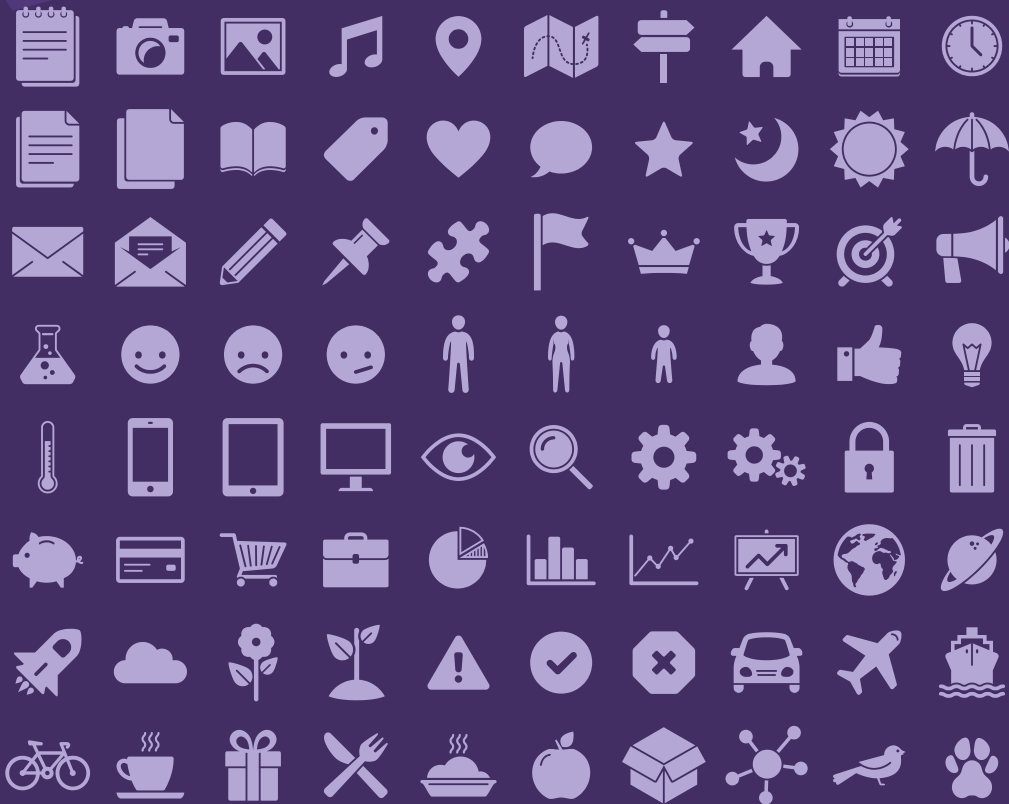
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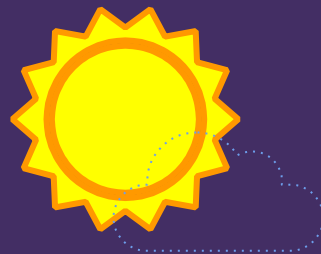
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