Nation-Building through Restorative Justice[*]

Thomas Gautier[†]   Daniela Horta-Saenz[‡]   Gianluca Russo[§]

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Abstract

How do societies rebuild after decades of institutionalized oppression and intergroup violence? We study the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which sought to rebuild the nation through public truth-telling about apartheid-era abuses. Using quasi-exogenous variation in exposure to live TRC broadcasts, we show that the TRC strengthened cohesion among Blacks, reducing interethnic violence and increasing national identification. At the same time, it weakened interracial relations, raising segregation and lowering intermarriage. Hearing content suggests these effects reflect intra-Black reconciliation driven by emotional engagement. These divisions had downstream consequences: using administrative tax data, we show they hindered public policy implementation.

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[†]Kiel Institute for the World Economy, email:thomas.gautier@ifw-kiel.de
[‡]Norwegian School of Economics, email:daniela.horta-saenz@nhh.no
[§]CUNEF, email:russo.gianluca.eco@gmail.com

1 Introduction

Decades of violence, repression, and systematic human rights abuses leave societies with fractured social relations. Such cleavages weaken institutional legitimacy, perpetuate cycles of violence, and undermine economic performance (Alesina et al. 1999; Alesina and La Ferrara 2005; Ray and Esteban 2017; Besley and Persson 2010). In their aftermath, national leaders face a fundamental question: how can groups once divided by conflict be transformed into fellow citizens?

One prominent response to these challenges has been the creation of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs)—temporary institutions that document past violations, acknowledge victims' suffering, and construct a shared historical narrative. Rather than emphasizing criminal prosecution, TRCs follow restorative justice principles, using public truth-telling to promote reconciliation and nation-building.[1] Whether TRCs actually advance these goals matters not only for cohesion and stability, but also for the effectiveness of public policies that require cooperation across formerly divided groups. Critics, however, argue that TRCs may backfire by heightening group salience or failing to deliver tangible justice. Despite the importance of this debate, we have limited empirical evidence on how national TRCs shape social and economic outcomes.[2]

In this paper, we fill this gap by studying one of the most prominent TRCs—the one implemented in post-apartheid South Africa. For nearly fifty years, apartheid institutionalized racial hierarchy between Black and White South Africans while fragmenting the Black population along ethnic lines. Following the democratic transition led by Nelson Mandela, a TRC was established in 1995 to promote national unity and reconciliation. It pursued this mandate through public hearings in which victims recounted abuses and perpetrators confessed to politically motivated crimes in exchange for amnesty. Between 1996 and 2000, the Commission collected over 22,000 victim testimonies, reviewed 7,112 amnesty applications, and produced a multi-volume report documenting historical events and offering policy recommendations.

We show that exposure to TRC hearings had uneven effects on nation-building, shaping identity and social relations with downstream consequences for public policy implementation. There are four main results. First, TRC exposure increased cohesion within the Black

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[1]Between 1974 and today, fifty three commissions have been established worldwide (Hayner 2010; Teitel 2014). Its popularity stems in part from praise by the UN and leading practitioners for the holistic approach of TRCs. (Secretary-General 2004; Boraine 2006). See Figure A.1 for a map and a comprehensive list of all countries that have established a TRC.

[2]The closest related evidence is provided by Cilliers et al. (2016), who study NGO-organized local reconciliation forums in Sierra Leone using randomized assignment and focus on psychological well-being and prosocial behavior.

population: it reduced interethnic violence and strengthened South African national identity among Blacks. At the same time, it heightened racial identity among Whites. Second, these identity shifts are accompanied by divergent patterns of social interaction. Higher exposure increased interethnic marriage and residential integration within Black communities, but reduced interracial marriage and interracial residential mixing. Third, we provide evidence that these effects are driven primarily by emotional engagement among Black South Africans rather than by informational updating. Fourth, TRC-induced racial divisions generated frictions in the implementation of affirmative action policies designed to promote the inclusion of Black employees in firms predominantly owned by Whites.

To establish these results, we rely on quasi exogenous variation in access to live, unfiltered radio broadcasts of TRC hearings. Soon after the commission began its work, it attracted extensive media attention and quickly became "one of the most mediated events ever taking place in Africa" (Verdoolaege 2005). Between 1996 and 2000, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) aired the hearings live on Radio 2000. Unlike other outlets, Radio 2000 was the only medium that broadcasted the proceedings in real time, bringing the emotional intensity of the testimonies directly into households across the country—a feature scholars have emphasized as central to shaping public reactions (McEachern 2002; Cole 2010). This unique source of live TRC coverage allows us to use access to Radio 2000 as our measure of exposure to the TRC (henceforth, exposure to TRC media).

We reconstruct geographic variation in exposure to TRC media by digitizing technical data on radio antennas from the Independent Broadcasting Authority (Independent Broadcasting Authority 1999). We then exploit the idiosyncratic interaction between signal propagation and topography to isolate variation in TRC media coverage that is plausibly exogenous (Olken 2009; Yanagizawa-Drott 2014; Durante et al. 2019). We link this suburb- or municipality-level variation in TRC media exposure to a uniquely assembled dataset combining multiple administrative and survey data sources. Our main outcomes draw on census microdata covering intergroup contact and residential patterns; identity and reconciliation attitudes come from Afrobarometer surveys; and violent events from SCAD and ACLED. We also compile the full corpus of TRC transcripts to analyze the content of the hearings and gather information on applicants and victims. To study downstream policy effects, we use firm-level administrative tax data.

Our first set of results shows that TRC media exposure helped pacify the country and strengthened national identity among Black South Africans. Exploiting data on violence from 1990 until 2017, we estimate a difference-in-differences model that exploits geographic variation in TRC media exposure and time variation before and after the TRC. We show that an increase in TRC media exposure leads to a persistent reduction in municipality-

level violence, lasting for nearly a decade after the end of the TRC. Decomposing the type of violence, we find that this decline is mostly driven by reductions in interethnic violence among Black South Africans.

We next examine national identity, exploiting the plausibly exogenous variation in TRC media exposure across suburbs while controlling for a rich set of pre-existing socioeconomic and geographic characteristics. We find that residents of suburbs with higher TRC exposure are significantly more likely to identify as South African rather than with their ethnic group. These effects are entirely driven by Black respondents. Among White South Africans, the estimated effect is negative, though not statistically significant. We further show that TRC exposure reduced the salience of identity differences among Black respondents while reinforcing exclusionary identity among Whites. In particular, Black South Africans exposed to TRC media were less likely to describe their group as "the best" or "very different" from others, whereas White respondents exposed to TRC media were more likely to endorse such claims.

In our second set of results, we argue that the shifts in identity and violence documented above were followed by behavioral changes in intergroup contact. This is an important dimension to study, as societies with higher levels of cohesion and social interaction tend to experience better economic and social outcomes (Knack and Keefer 1997; Cutler et al. 1999; Alesina and La Ferrara 2005). Using South African census data from 1996, 2001, and 2011, we reconstruct changes in municipality-level intermarriage and residential segregation patterns, both within and across racial groups.

Leveraging geographic variation in TRC media exposure and changes over time, we show that exposure increased social contact within Black ethnic groups while reducing contact between races. Specifically, higher TRC media exposure led to more interethnic marriages and lower ethnic segregation among Black South Africans, but fewer interracial marriages and higher racial segregation. Consistent with social identity theory, these behavioral adjustments unfolded gradually, with smaller estimates in 2001 and larger effects by 2011, suggesting that they were a downstream consequence of the earlier changes in identity (Shayo 2020). Importantly, we show that TRC media exposure is uncorrelated with changes in municipal demographic composition over time, ruling out selective migration as a confounding factor.

A natural concern is that our variation may capture general exposure to Radio 2000 rather than the TRC content itself. At the time, however, Radio 2000 was not a political or news outlet: outside the hearing hours, its programming consisted almost entirely of entertainment with no ideological content. To assess this more directly, we assemble data on other media outlets that covered the TRC and construct measures of alternative TRC media

exposure. These outlets reported on the Commission's findings but did not broadcast the hearings live. Including these measures as controls leaves our estimates virtually unchanged, and exposure to non-live TRC coverage has no systematic effect. That other TRC-related media did not generate similar effects suggests that the live component was essential, likely because unedited testimonies conveyed an emotional immediacy that edited summaries could not replicate.

In our third set of results, we examine the mechanisms underlying these asymmetric nation-building effects. By linking the timing and content of TRC hearings to Afrobarometer interviews conducted while the amnesty hearings were ongoing, we study how TRC media exposure shaped attitudes toward the Commission and reconciliation. We find that although both Black and White respondents became more likely to endorse symbolic gestures such as forgiveness or closure, only Black respondents viewed the TRC as important for nation-building and expressed greater support for proactive measures requiring personal or material action. Additionally, exploiting the fact that roughly half of the perpetrators testifying during this period were Black, we show that these shifts are concentrated on days featuring Black perpetrators and persist even when the perpetrator and respondent belong to different Black ethnic groups. Taken together, these results suggest that TRC exposure fostered reconciliation within the Black population.

We then ask what accounts for this intra-Black response: was it driven by the emotional intensity of live testimony or by new information about the systemic nature of apartheid? Using text analysis of all amnesty hearings, we show that Black perpetrators—often describing violence within the Black community—used roughly twice as many violent terms as White perpetrators and expressed substantially more remorse and reconciliation language. Moreover, attitudinal responses are strongest in areas with a higher presence of apartheid-era victims—our proxy for baseline information about apartheid crimes. These patterns indicate that emotional engagement, rather than pure informational updating, was the primary driver of reconciliation within the Black community.

Finally, we investigate downstream implications for public policy. Apartheid left stark racial economic inequalities: although Whites represent roughly 10% of the population, they continue to hold a disproportionate share of wealth, firms, and corporate assets (Mbewe and Woolard 2016; Chatterjee et al. 2022; B-BBEE Commission 2022). In response, the post-apartheid state introduced a range of policies aimed at redressing the economic legacy of apartheid. If the TRC reinforced racial divisions, it may have increased frictions in implementing those policies that require interracial cooperation and workplace integration.

We test this hypothesis by studying firms' responses to South Africa's flagship affirmative action policy, Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment(B-BBEE). The policy ties access

to public procurement to the adoption of racial inclusion measures, with a sharp compliance threshold at 10 million ZAR in annual sales. Using administrative tax records for the universe of firms from 2008 to 2018, we document strategic bunching just below this threshold in areas with greater TRC media exposure, with no comparable distortions at other revenue cutoffs. Leveraging the panel dimension of the data, we further show that firms in high-exposure areas are less likely to cross the threshold over time, even conditional on prior size. These patterns suggest that firms forgo growth in order to avoid B-BBEE compliance.

Taken together, these findings indicate that nation-building efforts that strengthen cohesion within groups but fail to bridge divisions across them can spill over into economically meaningful distortions.

We contribute to the literature on nation-building and institutional responses to intergroup divisions. A large body of work examines policies designed to deal social divisions—such as decentralization (Alesina and Spolaore 1997), post-conflict reconstruction (Fearon et al. 2009), resettlement (Bazzi et al. 2019; Carlitz et al. 2025), schooling (Cantoni et al. 2017; Blanc and Kubo 2025), and national service or conscription (Cáceres-Delpiano et al. 2021; Okunogbe 2024). While much of the literature treats nation-building as aggregate and symmetric, recent work highlights exclusionary dynamics that strengthen in-group identity in opposition to minorities or newcomers (Fouka et al. 2022; Esposito et al. 2023; Ang 2023). We extend this literature by showing that nation-building efforts can generate inherently heterogeneous and asymmetric effects: a single, centrally designed institution may foster reconciliation within historically fragmented communities while simultaneously deepening divisions across entrenched cleavages.

We demonstrate this in the setting of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions, one of the most widely adopted institutional responses to civil conflict using restorative justice.[3] Closely related, Cilliers et al. (2016) document the local effects of reconciliation forums on social capital and psychological well-being using experimental evidence. We extend this perspective by studying a national TRC, allowing us to examine how restorative justice reshapes social identity, intergroup relations, and violence at scale.

Second, we link nation-building to the effectiveness of public policy implementation. While a large literature shows that social cohesion facilitates collective action and state capacity (Luttmer and Singhal 2014; Besley 2020; Montenbruck 2023; Qian and Tabellini 2021; Caprettini and Voth 2023), we show that asymmetries in nation-building can directly

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[3]More broadly, our paper complements a growing quantitative literature on reconciliation and peace-building efforts in post-conflict settings, which studies how institutional responses to violence shape long-run social and political outcomes (see Section 5 of Rohner and Thoenig (2021)). Of particular interest is the quantitative political science literature examining the effects of restorative justice institutions and transitional justice processes (e.g., Gibson (2002, 2006); Balcells et al. (2021); Rozenas and Vlasenko (2022)).

undermine the performance of flagship public policies. In the South African context, we document that the identity dynamics triggered by the TRC weakened compliance with the Black Economic Empowerment policy in areas more exposed to TRC media, highlighting how uneven reconciliation can translate into policy distortions.

Finally, we contribute to the literature on media and political persuasion. Much of this literature studies contexts in which information is selectively framed, strategically edited, or explicitly propagandistic, emphasizing how curated content shapes beliefs and opinions (Yanagizawa-Drott 2014; Blouin and Mukand 2018; Armand et al. 2020; Bursztyn et al. 2023; Ahmed et al. 2025). In contrast, we examine exposure to live, unfiltered broadcasts of emotionally charged events. By combining detailed data on the content and characteristics of TRC hearings with high-frequency variation in exposure, we advance the understanding of the mechanisms through which media shapes attitudes. Our results indicate that emotional engagement was the primary channel driving identity changes, extending evidence that shared experiences can build national identity (Depetris-Chauvin et al. 2020). Consistent with this interpretation, effects are strongest in areas where prior knowledge of apartheid-era violence was already abundant, underscoring the role of affective immersion in shaping reconciliation and identity.

2 Historical and Institutional Background

This section briefly exposes how apartheid fostered both racial and ethnic cleavages in South Africa and how these divisions played out during the democratic transition. It then presents how the TRC attempted to reshape these cleavages, and highlights the role played by the media in disseminating its message among the population at large.

2.1 Apartheid and The Democratic Transition

Following the National Party's (NP) electoral victory in 1948, South Africa adopted apartheid, a system of white supremacy and institutionalized racial segregation that persisted until 1994. The regime classified the population into four racial groups—Black, Coloured, Indian, and White[4]—and enforced racial separation across all domains of life. The White minority retained near-exclusive control over national political power, quality education, skilled jobs, and the majority of public resources. Coloured and Indian communities occupied intermediate positions with limited rights, often facing discrimination and barriers to full participation.

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[4]Indians became a distinct statutory category in 1959. According to the 1996 Census, roughly 77 percent of the population was Black, 11 percent White, 9 percent Coloured, 2 percent Indian.

Black South Africans, by contrast, were systematically excluded from political representation and denied access to essential services and economic opportunities.[5] This system was enforced by both an enlarged internal-security apparatus and a divide-and-rule strategy that reinforced not only racial hierarchies but also deepened ethnic divisions within non-White groups.

The Reinforcement of Racial and Ethnic Divisions. Apartheid laws enforced strict racial segregation, shaping where people lived, worked, whom they could marry, and where they could attend school. Black South Africans were confined to under-resourced townships, denied quality education, and subjected to pass laws and constant police surveillance, making racial boundaries pervasive in everyday life.[6]

Beyond race, apartheid policies also entrenched ethnic fragmentation among Black South Africans. The homeland system classified individuals by ethnicity and forcibly relocated them to separate territories, reinforcing the idea of distinct "nations" and undermining a unified political identity (Figure A.2, Panel A).[7] These divisions were reproduced through the education system,[8] political institutions, and urban townships populated by migrants from different homelands. This fragmentation often fueled interethnic tensions and violence, weakening collective resistance to apartheid (van der Merwe and Johnson 1997; Mamdani 2018).

The Transition Period. By the late 1970s, internal resistance to apartheid had intensified, with student protests, worker strikes, and acts of sabotage met by lethal state repression, including detention without trial and extrajudicial killings.[9] Ethnic divisions remained significant, with clashes between rival political factions leading to thousands of deaths and instances of state linked violence (Amodio and Chiovelli 2018; Evans 2024).

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[5]Although the apartheid regime classified the population into four categories, our analysis focuses on the Black-White cleavage for both substantive and empirical reasons. First, apartheid's political and economic hierarchy was primarily structured around an opposition between Whites and the Black majority, who experienced the most severe forms of dispossession, repression, and ethnic fragmentation. Second, the TRC proceedings largely reflected this opposition, with the vast majority of victims or perpetrators appearing in front of the commission being either Black or White. Third, Afrobarometer samples of Coloured and Indian respondents are too small to support reliable subgroup analysis in our short-run attitude estimations. For these reasons, our empirical analysis centers on the Black-White divide.

[6]Group Areas Act (1950); Separate Amenities Act (1953); Bantu Education Act (1953); Immorality Act (1950); Population Registration Act (1950).

[7]Bantu Self-Government Act (1959). See Abel (2019), Eriksson (2014), and Mariotti and Fourie (2014).

[8]Separate ethnic colleges were created for Coloured, Indian, Zulu, Sotho, and Xhosa students. See Extension of University Education Act (1959).

[9]See Thompson and Lynn Berat (2014) for an overview of repression during the transition; Thompson (2000) for a general history of the anti-apartheid movement.

Despite escalating violence, secret negotiations between the ANC and the National Party began by 1987. In 1989, President F.W. de Klerk lifted the ban on opposition parties, released Nelson Mandela,[10] and signaled willingness to negotiate. These talks led to South Africa's first non-racial elections in 1994, ushering in Nelson Mandela's presidency and marking the birth of a new multi-racial and united democratic nation (Figure A.2, Panel B).

Yet, the transition left South Africa deeply fractured—socially, politically, and morally. Decades of systemic oppression and violence severely undermined interracial and interethnic unity. To confront this legacy and build a peaceful and inclusive society, the Parliament established the TRC in July 1995.

2.2 The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

The TRC's core mandate was twofold: (i) to collect and publicly document testimonies from victims of human-rights abuses committed under apartheid, and (ii) to grant amnesty to perpetrators who fully disclosed their politically motivated crimes. To ensure broad public dissemination of its proceedings, the TRC held two types of public hearings between 1996 and 2000: Human Rights Violation (HRV) Hearings (1996-1998) and Amnesty Hearings (1996-2000).

We obtain the universe of TRC hearing transcripts and use it to quantify the content of the proceedings.[11] We find substantial variation over time in references to violence, reconciliation, and remorse. Despite the different purposes of HRV and Amnesty hearings, their thematic content is broadly comparable (Figure B.22).

Human Rights Violation Hearings. HRV hearings collected testimonies from victims of apartheid-era abuses, who were given the opportunity to publicly disclose the violence they had suffered. The Commission received roughly 22,000 statements, of which about 10% were selected for in-person testimony in accessible venues across all nine provinces. Nearly all HRV testimonies were given by Black South Africans and frequently included vivid and often graphic accounts of torture, disappearances, and killings perpetrated by agents of the apartheid state—police, military intelligence, and far-right Afrikaner groups.

HRV hearings placed a strong emphasis on reconciliation. Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who chaired the Commission, infused the process with moral and theological symbolism, opening sessions with prayer and encouraging forgiveness. As he explained: "God has given us a great gift, Ubuntu... Ubuntu says I am human only because you are human... You

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[10]Mandela was imprisoned for 27 years (1962-1990) for his role in the armed struggle against apartheid.
[11]See Section B.5 for more details on data collection and construction.

must do what you can to maintain this great harmony... That's why African jurisprudence is restorative rather than retributive" (Mail & Guardian 1996).

This rhetoric often resonated with participants. One mother who lost her sons testified: "I want the people who killed my sons to come forward because this is a time for reconciliation. I want to forgive them..." (TRC Final Report 1998c, Vol. 5, pp. 378-391). While reconciliation was far from universal, the HRV hearings created a public ritual of contrition and forgiveness that shaped broader social attitudes.

Amnesty Hearings.   During Amnesty hearings, the Commission considered applications from individuals who had committed political crimes.[12] Applicants could receive amnesty in exchange for full disclosure; otherwise they remained liable for prosecution. The Commission received over 7,000 applications; 1,351 were heard publicly, and nearly 850 ultimately received amnesty (Figure B.23).

Crucially, Amnesty hearings included both Black and White perpetrators, thereby documenting a broader range of violence. Using the hearing transcripts, we compute that roughly two-thirds of applicants were Black (see Figure B.23).[13] Black applicants were typically members of the liberation movements, including ANC's armed wing, as well as other anti-apartheid organizations and township self-defense units. White applicants were predominantly agents of the apartheid security apparatus, including members of the South African Defense Force and far-right Afrikaner groups.

This racial composition of perpetrators led to the disclosure of different forms of violence that shed new light on the extent and nature of apartheid-era abuses. White perpetrators predominantly described violence inflicted on Black South Africans, often in graphic detail (e.g., see Figure B.24 for the July and August 2000 period).[14] For example, one former officer testified about a torture method he used: "It was a cloth bag... I would pull the bag over the person's head and twist it closed around the neck, cutting off the air supply" (TRC Final Report 1998c, Vol. 5, p. 369).

Black perpetrators, by contrast, revealed both violence directed against the apartheid state and extensive intra-Black political violence during the turbulent years preceding democracy. As Figure B.24 illustrates, a substantial share of the violence described by Black applicants involved Black-on-Black conflict. A salient example is the murder of Stompie Seipei, a young United Democratic Front activist abducted and killed by ANC members

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[12]The TRC defined gross human rights violations as acts causing physical or mental injury or death in the context of political conflict between 1960 and 1994 (TRC Final Report 1998a).

[13]We compute this share using applicants' names extracted from TRC transcripts. Data sources and coding procedures are described in Appendix B.5.

[14]Based on hearings overlapping with the 2000 Afrobarometer wave.

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after being wrongly suspected of acting as an informant (TRC Final Report 1998b, Vol. 2, pp. 567–570). These public disclosures also revealed how divisions within Black communities were frequently exacerbated—and often deliberately engineered—by apartheid security forces. For example, testimonies revealed how security forces armed and trained Inkatha militias to foment divisions within Black communities, or how Black askaris were used by Vlakplaas to commit killings in township (TRC Final Report 1998b, Vol. 2, Chs. 6–7).

In sum, the HRV and Amnesty Hearings produced a detailed public archive of apartheid's abuses, shaping both national and ethnic self-understandings. They introduced widely accessible evidence into public discourse and limited the space for denial or revisionism. Even former President F.W. de Klerk acknowledged before the Commission that apartheid was "a system that caused great suffering to millions of people" (TRC Final Report 1998a, Vol. 1, p. 68).

The Legacy of the TRC. Today, the TRC's legacy remains contested. While it is credited with helping South Africa move beyond social divides (Van der Merwe and Chapman 2008), its fairness and focus have been widely questioned. Some families of victims challenged the constitutionality of the amnesty provisions, and the Commission faced extensive litigation, including from political parties that accused it of bias. Many White South Africans viewed the hearings as punitive, while numerous Black South Africans saw the granting of amnesty as a betrayal of justice (Hamber 1998; Verdoolaege 2005). Critics have also argued that the Commission's narrow focus on individual acts obscured apartheid's broader structural harms (Mamdani 2000), with only a few high-profile politicians appearing before the Commission. These critiques suggest that, even as the TRC sought to promote reconciliation, it may have inadvertently reinforced certain social cleavages (Wilson et al. 2001).

2.3   Radio 2000

The influence of the TRC in South Africa was largely driven by the extensive media coverage it received. This broad visibility was enabled by the public nature of most hearings and by a strategic partnership with the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), which played a central role in ensuring that the TRC's work reached audiences across the country.

A key decision by the SABC was to rely primarily on radio as the main channel of communication. As noted in the TRC Final Report (1998a), radio was considered the most effective medium for reaching the broadest audience due to its affordability, widespread availability, and deep penetration across rural and urban areas.[15] While urban households often had ac-

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[15]Television also contributed to disseminating the TRC's work. A prominent example was the weekly program *Special Report*, which summarized the week's hearings and provided interviews and investigative

cess to both radio and television, radio remained the dominant and most accessible medium for the majority of South Africans (see Figure A.3).

Among all radio outlets, Radio 2000 played a uniquely important role in bringing the TRC into South Africans' homes. It offered the most comprehensive coverage by broadcasting the hearings live and unfiltered. Prior to and after the TRC, Radio 2000 functioned primarily as an entertainment station with no clear political orientation. During the TRC period, however, it aired the hearings live, with real-time translation into English (TRC Final Report 1998a), making the emotional intensity and narrative depth of the process accessible to a national audience.

3   Data

This section describes our data sources and the construction of the variables used in the analysis. Depending on the exercise we carry out, our geographic unit of analysis is either the suburb or the municipality, of which we have 11,119 and 769 without missing observations respectively. Geographic boundaries change over time; therefore, we therefore harmonize all data to a common set of census boundaries. In most cases, we use the 1996 baseline census boundaries. Appendix B provides detailed information on data sources and variable construction, while Tables A.1 and A.2 provide descriptive statistics for our main variables.

3.1   TRC Media Coverage

We obtain data on the location of all radio and TV antennas active in 1996 from the Independent Broadcasting Authority of South Africa (Independent Broadcasting Authority 1999). For each antenna, we extract information on their exact location, height, wattage, and frequency of operation. We impute missing information on antennas' height using the average height in the country.

We employ the standard Longley-Rice Irregular Terrain Model to compute Radio and TV signal loss at the suburb or municipality level (ITM, Hufford 2002).[16] The main inputs of the ITM model are the transmitter's power and frequency, the distance between transmitter and receiver, and the topography of the landscape between transmitter and receiver. Using the ITM model, we compute media coverage at the suburb level by taking the average signal associated with a particular media outlet. We then denote our treatment—TRC media—as the highest signal coming from the radio station Radio 2000. We redo this separately for

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reporting (Verdoolaege 2005).

[16]To do so, we used `CloudRF`, an established firm using state-of-the-art software to compute radio coverage.

each radio or TV outlet we are interested in studying. We follow a standard approach in the literature and rely on continuous variation in signal strength throughout the analysis (e.g. Yanagizawa-Drott 2014; Wang 2021). We express all continuous variables measuring signal quality in standard deviations. Appendix section B.1 provides further details on how we reconstruct media coverage.

3.2   Violence Data

Our main source of information on local violence is the Social Conflict Analysis Database (SCAD), which records episodes of protests, riots, strikes, and other forms of social unrest in South Africa from 1990 to 2017 (Salehyan et al. 2012). This data also records the type of violence—ethnic, religious, etc—and the actors involved. We further manually identified events characterized by Black-on-Black violence. SCAD captures fewer events than comparable datasets, resulting in relatively sparse observations. For this reason, we aggregate violence measures at the municipality level, although using suburb-level variation yields similar results. As a robustness check, we also replicate our findings using data from ACLED (Raleigh et al. 2023). However, because ACLED begins only in 1997, it does not allow us to examine pre-trends.

3.3   Individual-level Survey Data

We leverage six geocoded waves of the South African Afrobarometer surveys to measure how exposure to the TRC influenced national identity. The surveys were held in 2000, 2002, 2006, 2008, 2011 and 2015. Each wave collected data from 1,600 to 2,400 respondents. We measure national identity by constructing an index based on two questions capturing the sense of attachment to a united South Africa.[17] For the first question, we follow the nation-building literature and use the question labeled *Feeling South African* (*Feel SA*), which asks respondents how much they feel South African versus how much they feel they belong to their group (Depetris-Chauvin et al. 2020; Carlitz et al. 2025). The second question we employ, *Desire United South Africa* (*United SA*), gauges whether the respondent wishes that all groups in South Africa to be united under one nation. We construct our main independent variable by taking the average of the two respective indicators (using principal components yields identical results).

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[17]Appendix B.2 provide exact wording of all the questions used from Afrobarometer. Figure A.4 presents the location of the Afrobarometer's clusters that we assign to one of the 1996 South African suburb boundaries.

3.4 Census and Ancillary Data

The 1996 South African Census Community Profiles (CP)—which report demographic characteristics at the enumeration-area level—form the backbone of our data construction (Statistics South Africa 1998). We use the CP to extract pre-determined controls, including population size, the share of Black residents, and employment rates at the 1996 suburb level. We also assemble a set of geographic characteristics from external sources and merge them to 1996 suburbs (Wessel and Smith 1996; Bishop-Taylor et al. 2019). Changes in spatial sorting and intermarriage are measured using the 1996, 2001, and 2011 census waves. Depending on the outcome and data availability, we rely on Community Profiles, 10% census samples, or full census counts (Statistics South Africa 2003, 2014, 2015).

Segregation. Our baseline segregation measures are dissimilarity indices in 1996, 2001, and 2011 across enumeration areas within the boundaries of 1996 municipalities.[18] We calculate both a racial dissimilarity index based on the four official racial groups in the country, and an ethnic dissimilarity index based on the eleven Black ethnic groups. The index measures the share of the population that would need to be relocated across subunits for racial or ethnic groups to be evenly distributed within municipalities (Massey and Denton 1988; Cutler et al. 1999). Because the number of enumeration areas within the boundaries of 1996 municipalities might vary across census years, we always control for the census-specific log-number of enumeration areas within a municipality when using segregation as an outcome variable. See Appendix B.3 for more details.

Intermarriage. To study intermarriage we rely on the 10% samples of the 1996, 2001, and 2011 individual-level censuses, which allow us to detect spouses within a household. We build indicators for whether an individual has married outside of their racial or ethnic group. The lowest level of reporting in the individual census is the municipality level. We harmonize geographic units by matching the 1996 and 2001 municipalities to the 234 municipal boundaries used in 2011, the lowest consistent level of aggregation, and conduct all analyses at that level. See Appendix B.4 for more details.

3.5 TRC Data

To unpack mechanisms, we use detailed data from the TRC proceedings. We obtained the full transcripts of all hearings from the TRC and the SABC Archives, which provide the

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[18]For 2001 and 2011, we use *small areas* as subunits. In the remaining of the text, we refer to them as enumeration areas for simplicity.

date, location, names of applicants, and content of the hearings. To measure violence during apartheid, we use the TRC's victim registry, which records the date and location of politically motivated crimes from 1960 to 1994. Further details on data collection and processing are provided in Appendix B.5.

3.6 Firm-Level Data

Our firm-level analysis draws on matched employer-employee tax returns provided by the South African Revenue Service (SARS). We retrieve panel data of returns for tax years from 2008 to 2018 (National Treasury and UNU-WIDER 2021). The data comprehends information including revenues, annual sales, firm size, and industry, and have been widely used to study firm behavior, inequality, and policy responses in South Africa (Piek et al. 2023; Jacobs et al. 2024; Lediga et al. 2025). Firms' location in the data is reported at the postal code level, hence we aggregate and match media coverage accordingly (Kilumelume et al. 2022).

Descriptive statistics of our firm-level sample are reported in Table A.31. In total, we observe 704 thousand firms. The average firm has an annual revenue of 41 thousand ZAR and just below 50 employees. The plurality of the firms (23%) are part of the finance and business industry, while manufacturing and retail/motor-trade are the second and third largest industry in terms of number of firms (with 13% and 11% of observations, respectively).

4 Empirical Strategy

In this section, we outline the empirical strategy used in our analysis. First, we explain how we estimate the impact of overall TRC media exposure on nation-building by comparing areas with varying access to Radio 2000's signal. Second, we combine this geographic variation in signal strength with daily variation in TRC hearings to capture shifts in South Africans' attitudes occurring around the time of the trials.

4.1 Econometric Specification for Overall TRC Media Exposure

To estimate the impact of TRC media exposure on nation-building, we link cross-sectional variation in Radio 2000 signal strength to both cross-sectional and longitudinal outcomes. When using cross-sectional outcomes, we address concerns that signal strength may correlate with factors such as urbanization or economic activity by reconstructing exogenous variation in coverage generated by topographical features between transmitters and receivers (Olken 2009; Durante et al. 2019; Wang 2021; Russo 2024). We implement this strategy by using the

Longley-Rice propagation model (Hufford 2002) to reconstruct two types of signal strength. First, we compute predicted signal strength given actual topography. Second, we simulate a counterfactual "free-space" signal that assumes no topographical obstacles. We then regress outcomes on the actual signal strength while conditioning on the free-space signal. Conditional on variation in such hypothetical signal, the remaining variation reflects only variation in topographical features. With longitudinal outcomes, unit fixed effects already absorb the free-space component.

We illustrate both the raw and conditional variation in TRC media coverage in Figure 1. Panel (a) shows that actual coverage is unsurprisingly highest in more urbanized regions, such as the Eastern Cape and the Gauteng where Cape Town, Pretoria, and Johannesburg are located. Panel (b) displays the conditional coverage after partialling out the hypothetical free-space signal and geographic controls. In contrast to the raw pattern, the conditional variation appears more idiosyncratic and far less concentrated in major urban areas, providing evidence that our identifying variation is plausibly exogenous.

[Figure 1 about here.]

Violence　To study the impact of TRC media on violence, we rely on longitudinal data from SCAD between 1990 and 2017. This allows us to carry out a difference-in-difference analysis which we estimate with a two-way fixed effects model.

$$Y_{m,t} = \beta TRC\_media_m \cdot \alpha_t + \alpha_m + \alpha_t + \epsilon_{m,t} \tag{1}$$

In equation 1, $Y_{m,t}$ indicates the incidence of violence (log violent events) in municipality m observed at year t. Following Chen and Roth (2023), we explicitly weight the extensive margin as a 100% increase. We estimate the differential impact of TRC media exposure before and after the start of trials by interacting flexibly TRC_media_m with year dummies for all years in our data, setting 1996 as our reference year. α_m and α_t absorb unit and time effects. We provide additional results showing that our results are robust to accounting for province by year fixed effects, as well as trends in population, racial composition, and economic activity.

Afrobarometer　We employ a cross-sectional model to estimate the impact of TRC media exposure on national identity outcome variables from the Afrobarometer, which we observe only in the post-period. Equation 2 formalizes the cross-sectional specification we employ:

$$Y_{i,s,m} = \beta TRC\_media_{s,m} + \gamma TRC\_media_{s,m}^{free} + \theta X_{i,s,m} + \delta W_{s,m} + \alpha_m + \epsilon_{i,s,m} \tag{2}$$

where $Y_{i,s,m}$ is an outcome variable (e.g., national identity) for respondent i, in suburb s belonging to municipality m. Our independent variable of interest is $TRC\_media_{s,m}$, the signal strength associated with Radio 2000 antennas transmitting TRC content live during the years of TRC (1996-2000); $TRC\_media_{s,m}^{free}$ is the Radio 2000 coverage in the free space; $X_{i,s,m}$ are individual-level characteristics such as age, gender, and race; $W_{s,m}$ are suburb-level characteristics like socio-economics variables from 1996 census.[19] The vector also includes a large set of geographic characteristics, to further ensure that our variation does not rely on local drivers of signal strength but on the topography mix between transmitters and receivers. We include municipality by survey wave fixed effects (α_m) to account for the fact that we lump together multiple waves from the Afrobarometer.

Intermarriage and Segregation   To study the relationship between TRC media, inter-marriage and segregation, we leverage data from the South African census linking the 1996, 2001 and 2011 waves. When analyzing patterns of intermarriage, we rely on couple-level data and estimate the following difference-in-differences model:[20]

$$Y_{c,m,p,t} = \beta\, TRC\_media_{m,p} \cdot Post_t + \delta X_{c,m,p,t} \cdot Post_t + \alpha_{m,p} + \alpha_t + \alpha_{p,t} + \epsilon_{c,m,p,t} \quad (3)$$

where $Y_{c,m,p,t}$ equals 1 if couple c, living in municipality m, province p at time t (1996, 2001, 2011), is interethnic or interracial. In our baseline specification, we interact the geographic variation in TRC media with a post-TRC dummy ($TRC\_media_m \cdot Post_t$) to estimate the impact of TRC media on changes in intermarriage patterns between 1996, 2001, and 2011. The vector $X_{c,m,p,t}$ includes controls such as the race and age of the husband, and municipality controls interacted with decade fixed effects to account for demographic changes in the years that followed the end of apartheid.[21] In our baseline specification, we restrict the sample to couples whose husband is younger than 30 as this group is most likely to have formed new marital unions after the TRC period. We carry out sensitivity analysis to alternative age splits, to the use of the wife's age for filtering, and to the use of the wife's race and age as

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[19]Our full list of controls from the 1996 census include the inverse hyperbolic sine of population, share Black, share White, share English, share Afrikaans, share Zulu, share Xhosa, share Christians, average income score, share employed, share urban, share male, share South African citizens, share aged sixty and above, share married and share manufacturing. Our geographic controls include average temperature, average rainfall, average elevation, average ruggedness, distance to closest coast, distance to closest river, distance to closest lake, and average potential agricultural productivity.

[20]Since the South African census does not provide cross-wave id for matching, we harmonized our geographic unit at the 2011 municipality-level. We discuss this and other details of our dataset construction in Appendix section B.4.

[21]Municipality level controls include share of Black, White, Xhosa, and Zulu.

controls.

We leverage a similar specification for studying segregation, with the unit of observation being the municipality in a given year. Our outcome variable measures ethnic or racial segregation in municipality m, province p in year t (1996, 2001 or 2011). Our main index of segregation is a dissimilarity index but we provide additional evidence based on Gini and Theil information indices. The vector of controls X includes the same municipality-level controls measured at baseline as in the intermarriage analysis.

Standard Errors. In our cross-sectional analysis, we cluster standard errors at the municipality-level, the administrative unit directly above suburbs, the unit of analysis. In our longitudinal analysis, we cluster standard errors at the geographic level of variation, the municipality. In either case, we present additional results on inference by using standard errors that account for spatial correlation in the data (Conley 1999).

Evidence of Exogeneity and Pseudo First Stage. We demonstrate that TRC media coverage is exogenous to baseline characteristics and predicts higher radio consumption for all groups. Specifically, we regress baseline suburb characteristics, pre-period night light intensity, and pre-period incidence of violence on our conditional measure of TRC media exposure. We display the results of three increasingly saturated specifications, all of which include our baseline identification machinery: the TRC media *free* signal, geographic controls, and municipality fixed effects. We display the results of our balance test in Figure 2, where we standardize both dependent (indicated on the y-axis) and independent variables.

[Figure 2 about here.]

The results of our balance tests indicate that our identifying variation is largely uncorrelated with a wide range of predetermined characteristics. Across all three specifications, the estimated coefficients are small in magnitude and statistically indistinguishable from zero. We also show that this same source of variation predicts a positive take up in radio consumption. Appendix Table A.3 documents a positive and significant correlation between our conditional TRC exposure measure and the likelihood of listening to radio in the first Afro-barometer wave, for both Black and White South Africans. Taken together, these findings suggest that TRC media exposure is not systematically related to baseline observables and that we measure increasing radio use, generating a positive "pseudo-first stage" consistent with greater take-up of Radio 2000.

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4.2 Econometric Specification for the Salience Analysis

To investigate how South Africans respond to TRC hearings, we exploit the timing of the first post-apartheid Afrobarometer wave, conducted in mid-2000 while public TRC hearings were still ongoing. This wave includes a unique module capturing public opinions on the TRC and national reconciliation. Figure A.6 illustrates the daily variation in exposure to TRC hearings, based on the overlap between hearing dates and Afrobarometer interviews conducted in July and August 2000.

We implement a two-way fixed effects model leveraging two sources of variation: geographic exposure to Radio 2000 signal strength and temporal variation in hearing days. Our main specification is:

$$Y_{i,s,d} = \beta \, TRC\_media_s \cdot Hearing_d + \lambda X_{i,s} + \gamma_s + \gamma_d + \epsilon_{i,s,d} \tag{4}$$

where $Y_{i,s,d}$ gauges attitudes towards the TRC for individual i, in suburb s, on day d. TRC_media_s captures continuous cross-sectional variation in Radio 2000 signal strength across suburbs, and $Hearing_d$ is a binary variable equal to 1 if the interview occurred on a TRC hearing day. $X_{i,s}$ is a vector of respondent demographics available from Afrobarometer (age, race, gender, educational attainment, rural status). Day fixed effects γ_d account for common daily shocks, and suburb fixed effects γ_s absorb time-invariant local characteristics, including baseline signal coverage. Our coefficient of interest, β, captures the differential effect of hearing-day exposure to the TRC among respondents in areas with stronger Radio 2000 signal.

Our key identifying assumption is that individuals exposed to Radio 2000 on days when TRC hearings occurred are comparable to those interviewed on non-hearing days or in areas with weaker signal strength. We argue that both sources of variation plausibly satisfy this condition. First, comparability between exposed and non-exposed individuals follows directly from the plausibly exogenous variation in Radio 2000 coverage documented above. Second, the overlap between Afrobarometer interview dates and hearing days is unlikely to be systematically related to individuals' attitudes toward the TRC or reconciliation (Depetris-Chauvin et al. 2020).

We further bolster this claim in two ways. First, we assess balance on predetermined individual characteristics. Figure A.7 reports balance tests for age, gender, education, rural residence, race, and ethnicity, and shows no statistically significant differences across exposure groups. Second, we conduct a randomization test of hearing dates and show that our estimated coefficients lie far in the tail of the distribution generated by randomly reassigned hearing days, making spurious timing an unlikely explanation for our results (Figure A.10).

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5 Main results

Our main finding is that TRC media exposure promoted nation-building among Black South Africans while simultaneously deepening racial entrenchment. In this section, we develop this argument in three steps. First, we show that TRC media shaped public attitudes: Black South Africans viewed the Commission's work as contributing to nation-building and expressed greater support for reconciliation efforts, in contrast to more ambivalent responses from White South Africans. Second, we find that TRC media exposure led to an initial decline in interethnic violence and a rise in national identity among Black South Africans. Third, we document that this emerging sense of Black national unity translated, over time, into greater interethnic mixing within the Black population, but also into reduced interracial contact, reflected in fewer interracial marriages and increased residential segregation. We conclude by showing that these results are robust to a wide range of checks, including alternative variable definitions, model specifications, and falsification tests.

5.1 Attitudes Towards the TRC

We start by asking whether same-day exposure to TRC media shaped attitudes toward nation-building and reconciliation. Did South Africans tune in, did they form opinions about the TRC and the reconciliation process? Identifying such immediate reactions provides evidence on the emotional salience of the hearings, setting the stage for longer-term changes in nation-building. Ideally, one would design a survey eliciting South Africans' views on the TRC conditional on being recently exposed to a hearing. We mimic this setting by leveraging daily variation in TRC hearings around Afrobarometer interview dates, together with geographic differences in Radio 2000 coverage.

[Figure 3 about here.]

Our results—summarized in Figure 3—indicate that TRC media convinced Black South Africans that the TRC had a pivotal role in fostering nation-building in the country and it shifted their attitudes towards more proactive measures of reconciliation. In the first survey item we analyze, respondents are asked whether they believe the "TRC was important for building a united South African nation." We find that Black respondents are 18 percent of a standard deviation more likely to agree with this statement, whereas our results on White respondents indicate a null effect. The second set of questions asks what is required to achieve reconciliation, distinguishing between symbolic actions—e.g. forgetting the past, healing memories—and proactive behaviors, such as material compensation, amnesty, or personal contributions. Here too, we find heterogeneous effects by race. Black respondents

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are more likely to endorse both symbolic and material forms of reconciliation, while White respondents exposed to TRC media show increased support only for symbolic gestures. A one standard deviation increase in TRC exposure is associated with a 15-18% of a standard deviation increase in support for symbolic acts among both groups. However, only Black respondents show a measurable rise—about 10% of a standard deviation—in support for material aspects of reconciliation, while the effect for Whites remains muted.

We draw two main conclusions from these results. First, same-day shifts in responses provide direct evidence that Radio 2000 broadcasts actively engaged the public with the TRC. Second, the TRC's message resonated differently across racial groups: Black South Africans expressed stronger nation-building and reconciliation commitments, whereas White respondents favored only symbolic gestures, such as forgiving and moving on. In the next sub-section, we examine whether this divergence in attitudes translated into longer-run changes in nation-building.

5.2   Violence and Identity

Violence.   Promoting national unity "[...] in a spirit that transcends the conflicts and divisions of the past" was one of the core goals of the TRC (Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act 34 of 1995). In line with this goal, we continue our analysis by examining whether TRC media helped reduce violence—arguably the most immediate and observable expression of social division. We show that exposure to TRC media led to a meaningful reduction in violent conflict, driven in particular by lower interethnic violence among Black South Africans. We find not only fewer events but also fewer deaths, indicating a substantial decrease in the intensity of animosity.

We begin with an event-study analysis using longitudinal data from SCAD, shown in Figure 4. We find no evidence of differential pre-treatment trends before 1996, indicating that municipalities with varying degree of TRC media coverage had similar trajectories of violence prior to the start of the TRC. During the years of the treatment (1996-2000, marked by red dashed lines), violence declines gradually and noisily. Starting from the year 2000, the last year of the TRC activity, municipalities with greater TRC media coverage experienced a more sustained reduction in violent events. On average, we estimate that one standard deviation increase in TRC media exposure lowers violence by about 2 percent over the post-treatment period. This effect persists for roughly a decade before gradually dissipating over the course of the 2010s.

[Figure 4 about here.]

We expect the TRC to influence violence primarily through a reduction of intergroup animosity. Using the nature of events registered in SCAD, we show that this is indeed the case. Column 1 of Table 1 presents the overall reduction in violence we documented in the event study, next to the reduction in intergroup violence (column 2) and to the decrease in violence related to other issues, such as economic grievances (column 3).[22] The results show that the overall effect is driven largely by intergroup violence: a one standard deviation increase in TRC media exposure reduces intergroup violence by 1.7 percent, compared to 1 percent for other types of violence.

[Table 1 about here.]

Next, we examine which type of intergroup violence were most affected by TRC exposure. This distinction is important: during the final years of apartheid, violence in South Africa stemmed from both interracial conflict rooted in the legacy of apartheid and intra-Black ethnic tensions, particularly between liberation movements competing for political power in the new democracy (Amodio and Chiovelli 2018). Using SCAD data, we estimate that roughly 65% of intergroup conflicts prior to the final year of the TRC involved only Black actors, with the remaining 35% being interracial. Addressing both sources of violence was central to the TRC's mandate.

Columns 4 and 5 of Table 1 show that the decline in violence associated with TRC media exposure is driven primarily by reductions in Black-on-Black conflict. Column 4 indicates that a one standard deviation increase in TRC media exposure reduces intra-Black violence by about 1.5 percent, while column 5 shows that the estimated effect on interracial violence is small. This pattern suggests that TRC media exposure substantially mitigated intra-Black violence but left interracial conflict largely unchanged, despite the latter accounting for a sizable share of pre-TRC violence.

Finally, column 6 examines whether TRC media exposure also affected the intensity of violence by focusing on conflict-related deaths. We find that a one standard deviation increase in TRC exposure is associated with a 5.8 percent reduction in fatalities, indicating that the TRC not only lowered the incidence of violent events but also reduced their severity.

Taken together, these results suggest that the TRC played an important role in pacifying South African society in the years following its conclusion. However, the composition of the violence affected points to a more limited scope: while the TRC appears to have eased ethnic tensions within the Black population, it had comparatively little impact on interracial animosity.

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[22]SCAD records 13 different causes of violence. Among them, intergroup animosity and economic grievances are the most frequent, accounting for approximately 24% and 31% of recorded cases, respectively.

National Identity. We now turn to a second key dimension of nation-building: the formation of a national identity. Particularly in post-colonial settings, a stronger sense of national identity has been linked to well-functioning and cohesive societies (Alesina and La Ferrara 2005; Miguel and Gugerty 2005; Michalopoulos and Papaioannou 2013; Carlitz et al. 2025). Exploiting self reported data from the Afrobarometer, we find that exposure to TRC media promoted the formation of a national identity, with the impact driven by Black South Africans.

[Table 2 about here.]

We find a positive impact of TRC media on national identity. Similarly to violence, our results are driven by Black respondents and they appear right after the end of TRC. In this exercise, we pool available survey responses (all post-period) and regress them on TRC media coverage accounting for wave by municipality fixed effects. Column 1 of Table 2 shows our sparsest specification, where we control for the TRC *free* signal and key geographic and socio-economic controls. A one standard deviation increase in TRC media exposure boosts national identity by 2 percentage points. Progressively including ethnic, demographic and individual characteristics increases the magnitude of our estimate to 2.5 p.p. and raises its statistical significance to the 1% level (column 5). This effect corresponds to roughly 8 percent of a standard deviation of national identity in the control group.

We investigate the heterogeneous effects by race in column 6, where we account for race by municipality and race by wave fixed effects. A one standard deviation increase in TRC media boosts Black national identity by 1.7 p.p. (significant at the 5% level), whereas it reduces national identity for Whites by 1.4 p.p. (statistically non-significant). Finally, we highlight in Table A.23 that the effects of TRC media on national identity materialize in the years following the TRC and fade by the late 2000s.[23]

The previous results show that TRC media produced divergent responses across racial groups on national identity. We show that this divide extends to broader markers of identity, with evidence of exclusionary tendencies among White South Africans. Appendix Figure A.8 presents these results across four panels, using the same specification as column 6 of Table 2. The top panels show that TRC exposure increased both national and ethnic pride among Black respondents but only ethnic pride among Whites. The bottom panels reveal a similar asymmetry: Black South Africans were less likely to agree that their group is the best or very different from others, while White respondents moved in the opposite direction. Overall, while some results are not precisely estimated, TRC media appear to have fostered a

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[23]Table A.23 also suggests that the results are robust to alternative constructions of the national identity measure.

more inclusive national identity among Blacks—combining ethnic with national identification (Okunogbe 2024)—whereas among Whites it reinforced a more exclusionary identity, marked by stronger ingroup pride and perceived distinctiveness from the rest of the country.

5.3   Intergroup Contact

Our results so far indicate that TRC media profoundly shaped social identity in post-apartheid South Africa. It strengthened national belonging among Black South Africans while prompting a backlash among Whites who developed a more exclusionary identity. Because identity can guide behavior, we next examine whether these identity shifts translated into changes in social and economic decisions (Shayo 2020). Specifically, we ask whether Black South Africans made choices consistent with their strengthened sense of national belonging, and whether Whites acted in ways consistent with their retrenchment. This section addresses these questions by analyzing intermarriage and residential sorting, and finds results consistent with social identity theory: shifts in identity induced by the TRC reshaped marriage and residential choices. These behavioral adjustments unfolded gradually, suggesting they were a downstream consequence of earlier changes in identity.

Segregation.   Residential segregation is a key indicator of social integration, reflecting how individuals choose to live in relation to perceived group boundaries (Cutler et al. 1999, 2008; Boustan 2010; de Kadt and Sands 2021). If the changes in identity and conflict documented above also shaped residential preferences, we might expect to observe increased residential mixing among Black South Africans, alongside rising racial segregation. We test this with a two-way fixed effects model and segregation measures for 1996, 2001, and 2011 at the municipality level.

[Table 3 about here.]

We find that TRC media exposure is associated with higher levels of racial segregation and lower levels of ethnic segregation among Blacks (Table 3). Starting with segregation between races, column 1 reports that a one standard deviation increase in TRC media exposure is associated with a 2.9 p.p. rise in segregation.[24] Column 2 adds interactions between census-year fixed effects and language shares in 1996 (English, Afrikaans, Zulu, and Xhosa) to capture pre-existing demographic structures that may shape segregation dynamics. Column 3, our preferred specification, further includes province times year fixed effects. The

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[24]Our baseline results use a dissimilarity index as the measure of segregation. We find similar results using alternative measures, such as the Gini or Theil indices (Table A.25).

estimated effect remains positive and significant, corresponding to a 3 p.p. increase in residential racial segregation. Thus, a one-standard deviation increase in TRC exposure offsets roughly 4% of the 1996 average level in the dissimilarity index.[25]

Turning to interethnic segregation within the Black population, our most parsimonious model indicates a 3.2 percentage point reduction in the ethnic dissimilarity index in municipalities exposed to TRC media (column 4). However, as we account for initial demographic characteristics and province time trends, we estimate a smaller and non-significant reduction in ethnic segregation. Our preferred specification implies a non-significant 1.8 p.p. decrease in ethnic segregation—still meaningful in magnitude relative to national average: a one standard deviation increase in TRC exposure corresponds to 3.7% decline in the average dissimilarity index at baseline.

In previous sections, we showed that the TRC had immediate effects on national identity and violence. Panel (a) of Figure A.9 reveals a slower dynamic for residential patterns. Signs of increased racial and decreased ethnic residential segregation appear as early as 2001, although the estimated effects are small and at most marginally significant. By 2011, however, TRC exposure had sizable effects on both interethnic and interracial mixing—consistent with the interpretation that behavioral change followed shifts in identity rather than preceding them.

To assess whether the rise in segregation reflects genuine changes in local mixing rather than broader demographic shifts, we examine both municipality- and suburb-level dynamics (Table A.26).[26] At the municipal level, TRC exposure had no effect on the overall share of Whites or Blacks, indicating that the results are not driven by selective emigration or large-scale population movements. At the suburb level, by contrast, TRC exposure increased the share of Whites in initially whiter suburbs and of Blacks in initially blacker ones—a clear sign of local de-mixing rather than White flight abroad. Within the Black population, exposure reduced the concentration of Xhosa and Zulu residents in their respective strongholds, consistent with a loosening of ethnic boundaries.

Overall, these findings indicate that TRC exposure reshaped residential patterns primarily through local re-sorting—reinforcing racial clustering across groups while fostering greater integration within Black communities.

Intermarriage. Our second measure of intergroup contact is intermarriage, often regarded as one of the most salient indicators of social cohesion (Gordon 1964; Bisin and Verdier 2000). In South Africa, racial intermarriage was explicitly prohibited under apartheid, and as of

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[25]See Table B.32 for descriptive statistics on racial and ethnic dissimilarity index by census year.

[26]Between 1996 and 2011, the average White share across municipalities declined from 15.1% to 11.6% (Table B.32).

1996 fewer than 1% of individuals under age 30 were married to someone of a different race (Table B.32). Even within the Black population, interethnic unions were rare—around 3%—suggesting strong persistence of ethnic boundaries prior to the TRC. Following the democratic transition, these figures rose sharply: by 2011, the share of interracial marriages had doubled to about 2%, and interethnic marriages within the Black population had quadrupled to 12%. Against this backdrop, shifts in the likelihood of marrying outside one's group provide a meaningful revealed-preference measure of intergroup cohesion. We therefore test whether exposure to TRC media influenced intermarriage patterns across racial and ethnic lines over time.

Consistent with the segregation results, TRC exposure increased interethnic marriage while reducing interracial marriage (Table 4).[27] Starting with interracial marriage, we find that a one-standard deviation increase in TRC exposure is associated with a 0.27 p.p. decline in the likelihood of interracial marriage in our baseline specification (column 1). We sequentially add ethnic-by-municipality and ethnic-by-year fixed effects to account for local and temporal heterogeneity in ethnic composition (column 2), an interaction between initial ethnic composition and year fixed effects to capture the structure of local marriage markets (column 3), and province-specific time trends (column 4). This most saturated specification shows a statistically significant 0.24 p.p. decline in interracial marriage in municipalities more exposed to TRC media.

Similarly, columns 5-8 report the results for interethnic marriage. In the fully saturated specification (Column 8), a one-standard deviation increase in TRC exposure is associated with a 0.57 p.p. increase in the likelihood of marrying someone from a different ethnicity within the same racial group. This represents 6% of the size of the overall increase of 9% in the interethnic marriage increase from 1996 to 2011. As was the case for segregation, changes in intermarriage patterns take time to adjust, with coefficients systematically larger in 2011 relative to 2001 (Figure A.9, Panel B).

[Table 4 about here.]

Taken together, our findings suggest that TRC media exposure fostered nation-building among Black South Africans, for which we show more peaceful relations, higher national identity, and, over time, higher intergroup contact as measured by intermarriage and segregation. However, we document that this comes at the cost of simultaneously reinforcing racial boundaries and a decline in interracial contact in South Africa.

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[27]Table A.29 examines heterogeneous effects by race, showing that Black South Africans consistently display a positive and significant increase in interethnic marriage, while the effect for Whites becomes significant and positive once controls are added, overall suggesting a broader trend toward ethnic integration across racial groups.

5.4 Robustness Checks

In this section, we present a series of robustness checks to validate our main results. First, we show evidence that the effects are driven by exposure to the TRC broadcasts on Radio 2000, ruling out broader media effects. We then show that our findings are not driven by the endogenous placement of antennas or proximity to major urban centers. Next, we examine alternative specifications and different ways of constructing the outcome variables. Finally, we confirm that our results are robust to alternative methods for computing standard errors.

TRC Media vs General Media. We provide further evidence that our findings truly capture exposure to the live TRC broadcasts on Radio 2000, rather than a general shift in the South African media landscape. Although our identification exploits variation in Radio 2000's early signal coverage, other outlets also featured coverage of TRC-related topics during the same period. While these were far less prominent and did not broadcast the hearings live, their coverage could still confound our results if correlated with both Radio 2000 exposure and our outcomes. To address this concern, we reconstruct exposure to other radio and TV stations active at the time, which aired TRC-related content but not in live format.[28] As shown in Tables A.4,A.5,A.6, and A.7, our estimates remain virtually unchanged in magnitude and significance after controlling for exposure to these stations. Importantly, alternative TRC coverage has no significant effect on any outcome, except for segregation, where other radio coverage yields an opposite-signed coefficient. These findings rule out the possibility that our results capture broader media or second-order effects of exposure to the TRC.

Vicinity to Hubs. We confirm that our results are not driven by the endogenous placement of antennas or proximity to major urban centers. Although our identification already accounts for geography-specific fixed effects and distance to transmitters through its hypothetical signal, residual spatial patterns correlated with antenna locations could still bias the estimates. To address this, we first exclude geographic units containing transmitting antennas, focusing on areas where variation in signal strength is primarily determined by topography rather than antenna placement. As shown in Tables A.8, A.9, A.10, A.12, and A.13 excluding units hosting Radio 2000, TRC-related radio or TV antennas, or any antennas at all leaves our results unchanged in both magnitude and significance. Second, we directly control for distances to the two largest urban centers (Johannesburg and Cape Town) and to each provincial capital, capturing any remaining influence of proximity to major agglomeration centers. As shown in Tables A.14, A.15, A.16, A.17, A.18, and A.19, including these

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[28]See Appendix B.1 for further details on these media outlets.

controls does not alter our estimates, further ruling out the possibility that urban proximity or related unobserved factors confound our results.

Sensitivity Analysis. Next, we discuss a host of alternative specification, controls and ways to construct our main outcome variables.

– *Attitudes Towards the TRC:* We conduct a placebo exercise in which we randomly assign hearing dates across suburbs and re-estimate our baseline specification using the interaction between Radio 2000 exposure and the placebo hearing indicator. Figure A.10 shows the distribution of coefficients obtained from 1,000 random assignments. We observe that the placebo coefficients center around zero, while the actual estimate lies far in the tail of the distribution. This confirms that the actual hearing dates contain meaningful identifying variation and that our results are unlikely to arise from random noise or spurious timing effects.

– *Violence:* Table A.20 presents alternative functional forms of violence: the logarithm of per capita events, the inverse hyperbolic sine (IHS), and the probability of any violent event occurring (extensive margin). TRC media exposure continues to significantly reduce violence across all measures.[29] Table A.21 shows that our findings remain robust to additional controls, including year fixed effects interacted with ex ante population size, racial composition, economic activity, and province fixed effects. Finally, we show that the results hold across different data sources. While SCAD records pre-TRC conflict events, it is relatively sparse. To complement this, we use ACLED, which offers more comprehensive coverage but starts only in 1997. Using specification 2, we find that TRC media exposure significantly reduces total violence, driven mainly by the most severe events, consistent with the SCAD results, see Table A.22.

– *National Identity:* Table A.23 presents the results of estimating the impact of TRC media exposure on each survey question separately, to ensure that the results are not driven by the construction of the index. We find that the estimated effects and their dynamics closely match those in the baseline. Table A.24 then shows that our results are robust to alternative definitions and samples. Including the first survey wave—after harmonizing a comparable question on feeling South African—does not alter our findings. Results also remain unchanged when constructing the index using the first principal component, either within the baseline sample or across all waves. Finally, expanding the definition of national identity to include whether respondents want their children to identify as South African yields consistent results.

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[29]Corresponding event study plots are shown in Figures A.11, A.12, and A.13. Results are also robust to discretizing our treatment and estimating it using a specification that accounts for treatment effect heterogeneity (de Chaisemartin and D'Haultfœuille 2020), see Figure A.14.

– *Residential Segregation:* Table A.25 reports results based on two alternative measures of segregation: the Gini coefficient and the Theil Index. While these indices capture segregation from distinct conceptual angles—relative dispersion and entropy—they produce results that closely align with our baseline estimates. Exposure to TRC media coverage significantly increases racial segregation, whereas the effects on ethnic segregation remain negative but statistically insignificant.

– *Intermarriage:* Table A.27 shows that the results are robust to alternative age cutoffs, with findings remaining similar to the base line when focusing on individuals younger than 35, 40, or 45. As the sample expands to include couples with older husbands—who were more likely to have married earlier—the coefficient size declines mechanically. Moreover, when using women's age to define the couple's reference age, we keep observing a significant increase in interethnic marriage and a decrease in interracial marriage (Table A.28).

Alternative Inference. We conclude our sensitivity analysis by examining alternative approaches for computing standard errors. Specifically, we cluster at the transmitter level and account for spatial correlation within 75 km and 150 km (Conley 1999). Table A.30 confirms that our results remain statistically significant regardless of the standard error specification.

6   Mechanisms

We have shown that the TRC fostered nation-building among Black South Africans while increasing social distance between racial groups. We argue that this dual effect arises because reconciliation occurred only among Black South Africans, driven by the emotional engagement elicited by the TRC's live hearings.

To unpack these mechanisms, we leverage day-to-day variation in exposure to individual hearings to identify immediate attitudinal responses to live TRC broadcasts and how they vary with hearing characteristics (see equation 4 and Section 4.2). We proceed in three steps. First, we show that the nation-building effects reflect in-group reconciliation among Black respondents. Second, we examine what drove this reconciliation and provide evidence consistent with an emotional channel rather than a process of information updating. Finally, in Appendix C, we rule out alternative explanations and show that the increased cohesion among Black South Africans reflects reconciliation rather than other mechanisms.

6.1 TRC Fostered Black Reconciliation

As shown in Figure 3, exposure to the TRC significantly changed how individuals understood what is required to achieve national reconciliation. Both Blacks and Whites became more likely to recognize the importance of symbolic measures. However, only Black respondents became more likely to support material measures and amnesty. These shifts suggest that the public at large, and Black South Africans in particular, were receptive to the TRC's message and underwent a substantial attitudinal transformation.

But did this shift in attitudes extend across racial lines, or was it primarily an in-group process? If reconciliation was experienced mainly within racial groups, this could explain why nation-building strengthened among Black South Africans while intergroup contact declined. To test this, we examine whether changes in attitudes toward reconciliation are strongest when perpetrators belong to the same race as respondents.[30]

[Figure 5 about here.]

Consistent with an in-group reconciliation mechanism, we show in Figure 5 that Black respondents became significantly more likely to view the TRC as important for nation-building and to support both symbolic and material reconciliation measures when a hearing featured a Black perpetrator, regardless of ethnic affiliation.[31]

Among White South Africans, we generally observe little to no reaction to TRC media exposure across most outcomes. In particular, White South Africans did not shift their attitudes in response to Black hearings (Figure 5). This suggests that the limited responsiveness among White audiences stems from a deeper sense of disconnection from the TRC process itself. These results are in line with a more instrumental reaction of White respondents to the hearings, as the only situation when they shift their views is following a White perpetrator hearing, where they become more likely to support the amnesty process. These results highlight the challenge of fostering inclusive nation-building in deeply divided post-conflict societies.

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[30]We manually coded the race and ethnicity of amnesty applicants in our sample, see Appendix B.5 for details.

[31]To ensure these effects are not simply due to ethnic ingroup bias (e.g., a Xhosa respondent hearing a Xhosa applicant), we conduct two robustness checks. First, we exclude respondents from the largest ethnic groups—Xhosa and Zulu. Second, we retain these respondents but drop hearings featuring applicants from their same ethnic group. The results remain consistent across both checks, indicating that the observed effects reflect broader identification rather than narrow ethnic ingroup bias (see Figures A.15).

6.2 Unpacking Emotional and Informational Channels

Why did live, unfiltered exposure to Black testimonies during the TRC generate such strong reconciliation responses among Black South Africans? Historical accounts indicate greater engagement with the TRC process among Black perpetrators and victims, yielding testimonies that were both more detailed and more explicitly reconciliatory (Krog 1998; Boraine 2000). This suggests two potential channels: informational disclosure and emotional engagement. Under an informational channel, exposure to the hearings allows individuals to update beliefs about the scope, nature, or motivations of apartheid-era violence. Under an emotional channel, the affective power of live testimony (often marked by remorse, contextualization, and narrative detail) may validate lived experiences, foster empathy, and facilitate intra-group reconciliation.

We assess these channels in two steps. We exploit the fact that Black South Africans accounted for roughly two-thirds of all applications to examine whether the content of perpetrator testimonies indeed differs systematically by race, and in what ways.[32] Using the full corpus of amnesty hearing transcripts, we compute the frequency of words related to violence and reconciliation (see Appendix B.5 for details). Figure A.16 shows that Black perpetrators used roughly twice as many violent terms as White perpetrators, suggesting their statements were more detailed and emotionally charged. They also employed more language expressing remorse and reconciliation. These patterns point toward a deeper engagement by Black perpetrators with the TRC's truth-telling and reconciliatory aims, confirming that both channels may explain the stronger responses among Black respondents.

While both channels are plausible, we argue that the emotional channel is more likely to explain our results. Although the TRC's findings were widely reported by other media outlets, we show that only live coverage via Radio 2000—rather than delayed reports or summaries—generated significant effects on nation-building (see Section 5.4). This pattern suggests that informational exposure alone is insufficient to explain the observed attitudinal changes. Moreover, we test whether TRC effects vary with prior exposure to information about apartheid-era violence. If the TRC worked mainly through information, its impact should be weaker in areas where hearings offered little new content. Conversely, if emotional engagement was central, TRC exposure should have stronger effects where its content resonated more deeply. We proxy prior knowledge by the number of TRC-registered victims in each suburb and find that TRC exposure had stronger effects in places with more victims (Figure A.17), directly supporting the emotional channel.

Taken together, these patterns suggest that emotional engagement, rather than informa-

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[32]We provide more details on the hearings in Section 2 and online Appendix B.5.

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tion acquisition, was the key driver of reconciliation and nation-building among Black South Africans.

7 Public Policy

This section examines how the unintended racial divide generated by exposure to the TRC may have affected firms' compliance with post-apartheid affirmative action policies.

Despite democratization, South Africa remains among the most unequal societies in the world, with wealth and productive assets still overwhelmingly concentrated in the hands of White South Africans.[33] To redress such enduring disparities, the work of the TRC was paired with an ambitious institutional agenda to dismantle the economic legacies of apartheid (TRC Final Report 2003). A central pillar of such agenda has been affirmative action legislation—most notably, the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) initiative—which incentivizes firms to promote racial integration by hiring, training, and advancing historically discriminated groups.[34] Additional details on the B-BBEE policy are available in Appendix Section D.

In this section, we examine whether the racial polarization triggered by the TRC inadvertently weakened firms' willingness or capacity to comply with B-BBEE requirements. To do so, we test whether firms located in areas with greater TRC media exposure exhibited stronger bunching behavior to avoid falling under the B-BBEE compliance threshold.

7.1 The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment

The B-BBEE policy was originally introduced in 1993 and has been amended several times since then. Its goal is to curb racial inequalities within South African firms by promoting the economic empowerment of historically discriminated groups in the country.

At the core of the B-BBEE policy lies a framework designed to incentivize firms to promote racial inclusion in ownership, employment, and economic participation. Compliance with B-BBEE is particularly important for the public procurement process since higher B-BBEE status lead to preferential treatment in contract bidding. In turn, the overall B-BBEE status is determined by an overall score that is awarded based on how well a firm promotes racial inclusion.

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[33]For instance, the top 10% of the population holds roughly 86% of total wealth and 60% of business assets. Black people in 2016 only held 5% of White people wealth (Mbewe and Woolard 2016; Chatterjee et al. 2022). For more on the topic, see Leibbrandt et al. (2010); Kerr (2025); Czajka and Gethin (2025).

[34]Initially focused on Black South Africans, the B-BBEE's scope was later expanded to include all groups discriminated against under apartheid (Lindsay 2015). For a study on the effects of B-BBEE see Brink and Orban (2025).

Crucially, compliance requirements vary by revenue: Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) with annual revenues below 10 million ZAR automatically receive the highest status, while Qualifying Medium Enterprises (QMEs) with revenues between 10 and 50 million ZAR receive a baseline status—typically necessitating further action to improve their status. Large enterprises with revenues exceeding 50 million ZAR are solely assessed by their B-BBEE scorecard. This tiered structure creates significant compliance pressures at the 10 and 50 million ZAR thresholds (Lindsay 2015).

7.2 Empirical Analysis

To test whether TRC exposure decreased compliance with B-BBEE, we investigate whether firms in TRC-exposed areas are more likely to bunch just below the 10 million ZAR threshold. We focus on the 10 million threshold for two reasons. First, this threshold is relevant to a much higher share of firms as compared to the 50 million ZAR threshold. Second, management decisions in larger firms with multiple plants are less likely to be influenced by local conditions such as exposure to the TRC.[35]

To conduct our bunching analysis, we use panel data from South African business tax returns, tracking firm characteristics, particularly annual revenues, from 2008 to 2018 (National Treasury and UNU-WIDER 2019, 2021).[36] We categorize firms into low- and high-TRC, defining as low-TRC (high-TRC) firms that lie within the first (fourth) quartile of the distribution in terms of residualized TRC exposure. We analyze this data with two complementary strategies. First, we compare the relative size of the bunching among high- versus low-TRC firms by pooling together data from separate years in a cross sectional analysis (Chetty et al. 2011; Kleven 2016). Second, leveraging the longitudinal nature of the dataset, we estimate the differential likelihood of a high-TRC firm vs a low-TRC firm to grow over time from a million bin to the next (Garicano et al. 2016).

Cross-Sectional Bunching. In our cross-sectional analysis, we compare the extent of bunching at the B-BBEE compliance threshold between high- and low-TRC exposure firms. Following the standard approach in the bunching literature (Chetty et al. 2011; Kleven 2016), we estimate the excess mass of firms around the threshold by fitting a smooth polynomial to the observed distribution of annual sales and computing the deviation between the fitted

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[35]10 million ZAR are equivalent to about 560,000 2024 USD whereas 50 million ZAR to 2,800,000 2024 USD.

[36]We provide a detailed description of the data in section 3 and Data Appendix subsection B.6.

and observed densities. More specifically, we estimate the following equation:

$$c_j = \sum_{i=0}^{p} \beta_i (z_j)^i + \sum_{i=z_-}^{i=z_+} \gamma_i 1[z_j = i] + \eta_j \tag{5}$$

where c_j is the number of firms in bin j, z_j is the revenue in bin j, $[z_-, z_+]$ is the excluded range, and p is the order of the polynomial.

In the baseline specification, we exclude observations between ZAR 9.5 million and 11 million, use a bin width of ZAR 250,000, and assign treatment intensity according to the firm's first reported zipcode. Robustness checks yield consistent results when using symmetric exclusion windows or assigning treatment based on the firm's location in a specific year.[37] We then extrapolate the fitted distribution to the excluded range and compute the difference between actual and predicted counts to obtain the excess mass of firms, measuring the size of bunching.

[Figure 6 about here.]

Figure 6 illustrates the bunching estimation for firms in areas with low and high exposure to the TRC (left and right panels, respectively). In both cases, there is a marked concentration of firms just below the 10-million-ZAR revenue threshold—where compliance with affirmative action legislation becomes mandatory—followed by a sharp drop in firm density immediately above it. However, the deviation from the counterfactual distribution is slightly more pronounced in the high-TRC sample compared to the low-TRC sample, suggesting stronger avoidance behavior.

Quantitatively, we estimate that the excess mass below the threshold is approximately 240 firms larger in high-TRC areas than in low-TRC areas, corresponding to about 3.3% of the total number of firms in the control group's counterfactual distribution around the threshold. In Appendix Figures A.18, A.19, and A.20, we confirm the robustness of these findings using a symmetric exclusion window or assigning treatment based on firms' locations in the last available year (2018).[38]

Panel Analysis. The panel dimension of the NT-SDF dataset allows us to track the evolution of firms' annual sales and estimate the probability of moving up in the revenue distribution around the 10-million-ZAR B-BBEE threshold (Garicano et al. 2016).

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[37]We rely on the location declared in a specific year to minimize measurement error, as later data extractions from the National Treasury contain more accurate location identifiers.

[38]Standard errors are computed using a bootstrap procedure in which residuals from Equation 5 are randomly reshuffled 250 times (Chetty et al. 2011; Kleven 2016).

To examine how exposure to the TRC affects firms' growth dynamics, we estimate the following specification:

$$y_{i,t,p} = \sum_{b=b_-}^{b_+} \beta_b \cdot TRC_{i,p} \cdot 1[Revenue_{i,t,p} = b] + \gamma_i + \theta_t + X_{i,t,p} + \epsilon_{i,t,p}, \qquad (6)$$

where the outcome of interest, $y_{i,t,p}$ is a dummy variable taking a value of 1 if firm i with postal code p grew from bin b to bin $b+1$ from year t to year $t+1$. Firm-level fixed effects $\gamma_{i,p}$ absorb any time-invariant firm characteristics, while time fixed effects θ_t absorb any time shocks that might affects all firms. The vector of controls $X_{i,t,p}$ crucially includes bin fixed effects. The vector β_b contains the coefficients of interest, which represent the bin-specific effects of exposure to TRC on the probability of growing to the next bin.

[Table 5 about here.]

Table 5 presents the results. Firms in high-TRC areas are equally likely as those in low-TRC areas to grow between 6 and 9 million ZAR in annual sales. However, once they reach the 9-million-ZAR bin, high-TRC firms are significantly less likely to cross the 10-million-ZAR threshold. Beyond this point, the likelihood of further growth again becomes statistically indistinguishable across groups. This pattern is consistent across all specifications: we estimate a reduction in growth probability of about 4.5% in the baseline which increases slightly to 5% when controlling for municipality-by-year, year-by-sales-bin, and year-by-industry fixed effects (columns 2-5).

Taken together, these results indicate that TRC exposure is associated with strategic bunching at the threshold where affirmative action compliance becomes mandatory. Two mechanisms could account for such an effect. First, the heightened salience of race following the TRC could have reinforced taste-based discrimination. Second, reduced inter-racial contact might have increased the costs of integration, by limiting information flows and social networks across racial lines, thereby hindering firms' ability to recruit or collaborate with qualified candidates from other groups.

While we do not take a definitive stance on which mechanism dominates, our evidence suggests that the racial divisions unintentionally reinforced by the TRC amplified the distortions associated with affirmative action requirements, highlighting a tangible link through which social divisions can translate into economic inefficiency.

8   Conclusion

More than thirty years after South Africa's democratic transition, its reconciliation model remains contested. While internationally credited with averting civil conflict, it is often criticized at home for its limited contribution to long-run social integration and economic transformation—a tension epitomized by the TRC. This paper helps clarify why both assessments coexist. Using differential exposure to live and unfiltered broadcasts to the TRC hearings, we show that the Commission played a meaningful role in reducing interethnic violence and fostering reconciliation within Black communities, an outcome of first-order importance in a fragile post-conflict context. At the same time, the TRC contributed to the entrenchment of racial boundaries, with lasting consequences for social integration and economic policy implementation. Together, these results highlight a fundamental tension in publicly mediated reconciliation processes, raising broader questions about how such institutions reshape societies over time.

While reconciliation is often viewed as a precondition for effective redistribution, our results show that the identity dynamics induced by the TRC can complicate the implementation of redistributive policies. Using administrative tax records for the universe of firms, we document that greater TRC exposure led to bunching just below the ZAR 10 million revenue threshold at which B-BBEE compliance becomes binding. In this sense, reconciliation-induced racial divisions translated into concrete frictions in the implementation of South Africa's flagship redistribution policy. More broadly, in settings where economic capital remains unevenly distributed across groups, restorative justice may fall short of its full potential if not paired with early and credible redistribution; when implemented sequentially, reconciliation may even make redistribution more difficult.

Our findings also raise broader questions about the role of live, unfiltered broadcasting in shaping the social fabric. This issue matters for two related reasons. First, truth commissions differ sharply in their design choices: some conduct hearings behind closed doors, others grant access to journalists or the public, and only a subset allow live broadcasts. Second, these design choices resonate with broader changes in how information is consumed, as individuals increasingly encounter political events through media that emphasize immediacy and emotional salience. In this respect, the South African experience highlights a central tension: emotionally powerful processes can foster reconciliation within some groups while reinforcing boundaries across others, underscoring that institutional design entails trade-offs across dimensions of social cohesion. How these trade-offs are navigated shapes whether reconciliation efforts ultimately complement or complicate broader political and economic reconstruction.

As countries across the world continue to adopt TRCs—in Africa, Latin America, and beyond—our findings underscore the importance of understanding not only the direct goals of these institutions but also their unintended consequences. The South African experience suggests that the emotional power of live truth-telling can be a potent tool for healing within groups, but may fall short of bridging divides across them. More broadly, our findings highlight that the success of restorative justice depends not only on whether truth is told, but on how it is mediated, to whom it speaks, and how it interacts with the distributional realities that persist long after political transitions.

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Figure 1: TRC Media Exposure, Actual and Residual Variation
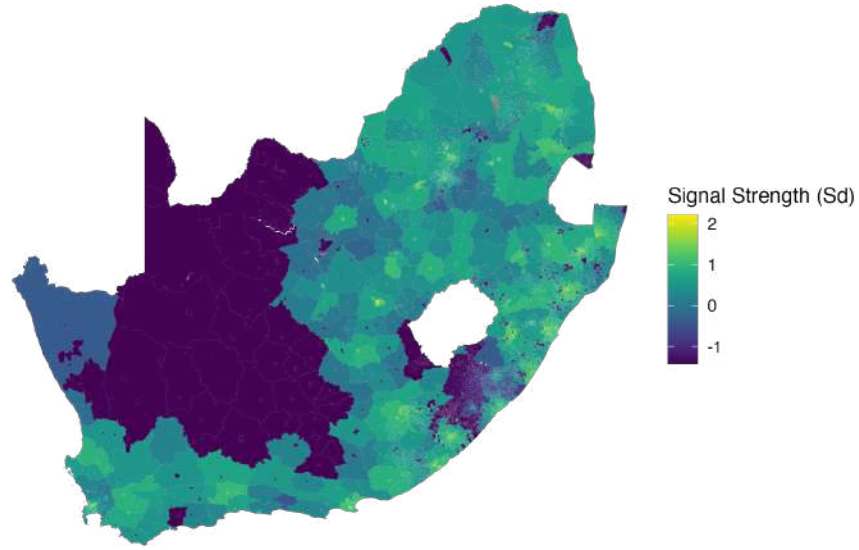
(a) TRC Media Coverage
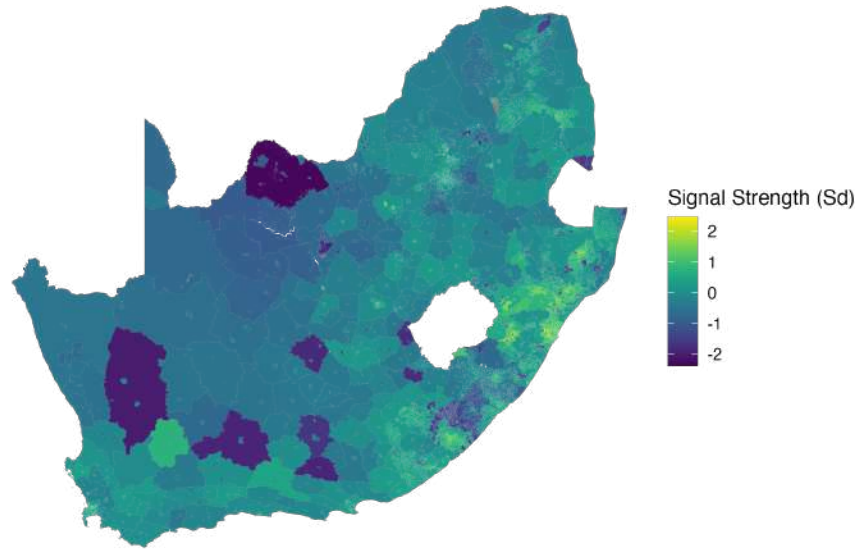
(b) TRC Media Residual Coverage

Notes: The maps display Radio 2000 coverage (panel a) and its residualized counterpart (panel b), both standardized to have mean zero and standard deviation one. Lighter colors (yellow) indicate stronger signal strength, while darker colors (purple) indicate weaker signal strength. Media coverage is computed using the Irregular Terrain Model (Hufford 2002), which incorporates antenna characteristics and terrain topography. The residualized variation displayed in panel b is obtained by regressing the actual signal strength on the free signal strength and baseline geographic characteristics. See Section 3.1 for details on the construction of the coverage measures.

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Figure 2: TRC Media Exposure Balanced on Pre-Determined
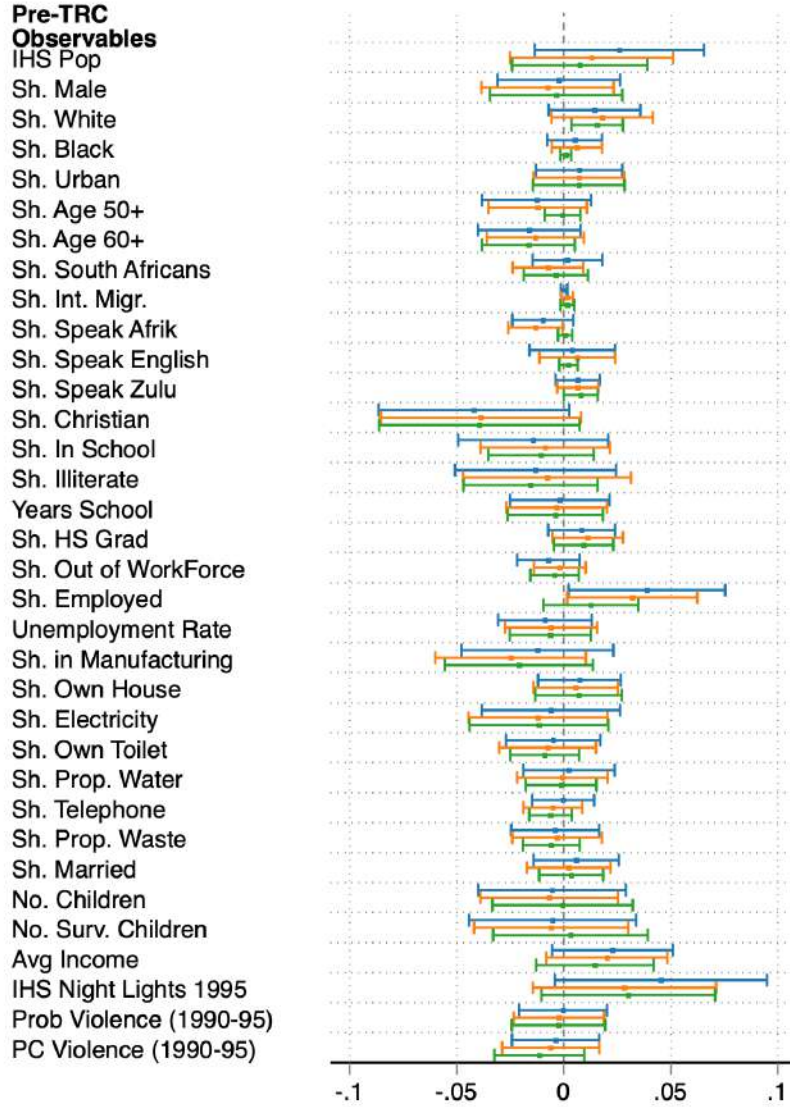
Notes: This figure presents balance tests of TRC media exposure on predetermined suburb-level characteristics. Each coefficient comes from a separate regression of the variable listed on the y-axis on TRC media exposure; both dependent and independent variables are standardized. Points denote coefficient estimates and bars indicate 95% confidence intervals from three specifications. The top (blue) markers correspond to the baseline cross-sectional specification, which includes the TRC free-space signal, 1996 population, shares White and employed, area, altitude, ruggedness (and their squared terms), and municipality fixed effects. The middle (orange) markers additionally include the remaining geographic controls (temperature, precipitation, agricultural suitability, distance to coast, river and lakes) and their squared terms. The bottom (green) markers include the full set of suburb-level socio-demographic controls (shares of English, Afrikaans, Xhosa, and Zulu speakers; the Black population share; average income category; the shares of urban residents, married individuals, Christians, and individuals aged 60 or older). Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level. Appendix Figure A.5 reports balance tests comparing our identifying variation with its naive counterpart.

Figure 3: TRC Media Exposure and Attitudes Towards TRC and Reconciliation
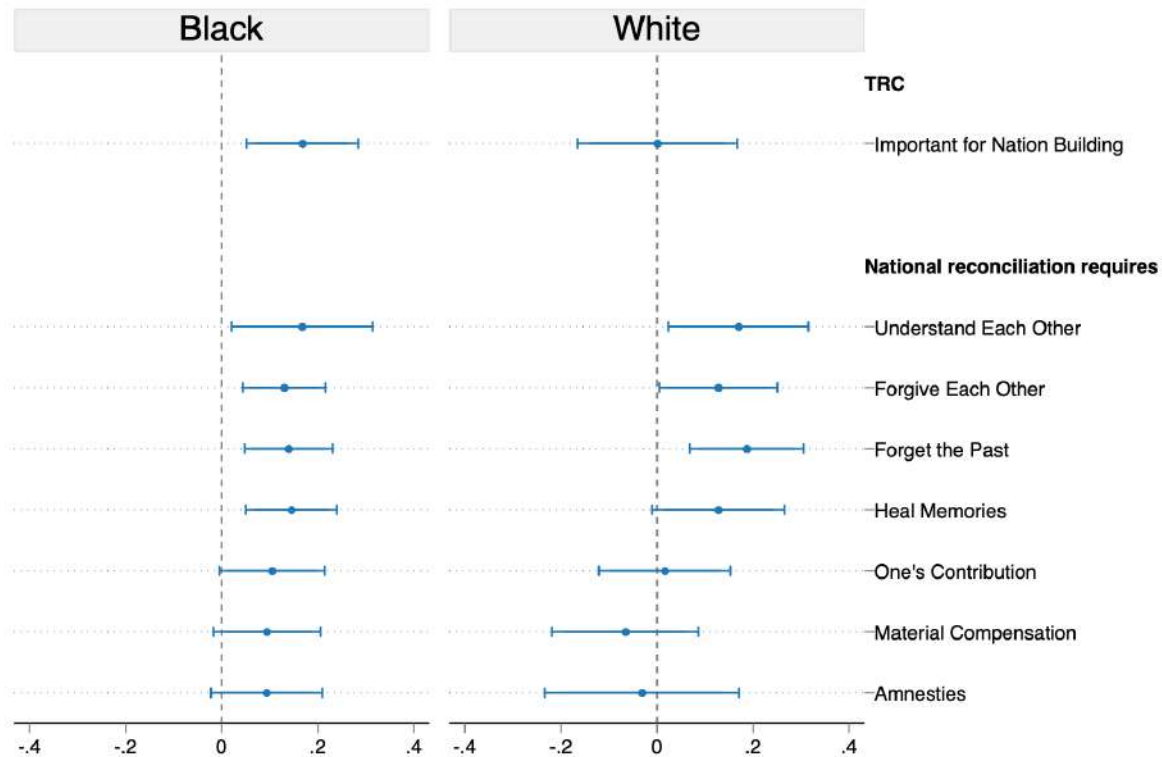
Notes: This figure plots the estimated effects of TRC media exposure on attitudes toward the Commission's work and reconciliation, using specification 4. Race-specific effects are reported as marginal effects from fully interacted models that interact TRC media exposure with race indicators. All specifications include individual-level controls for gender, race, age, age squared, rural residence, and educational attainment. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals, and standard errors are clustered at the suburb level.

Figure 4: The Effect of TRC Media Exposure on Violence, Event Study
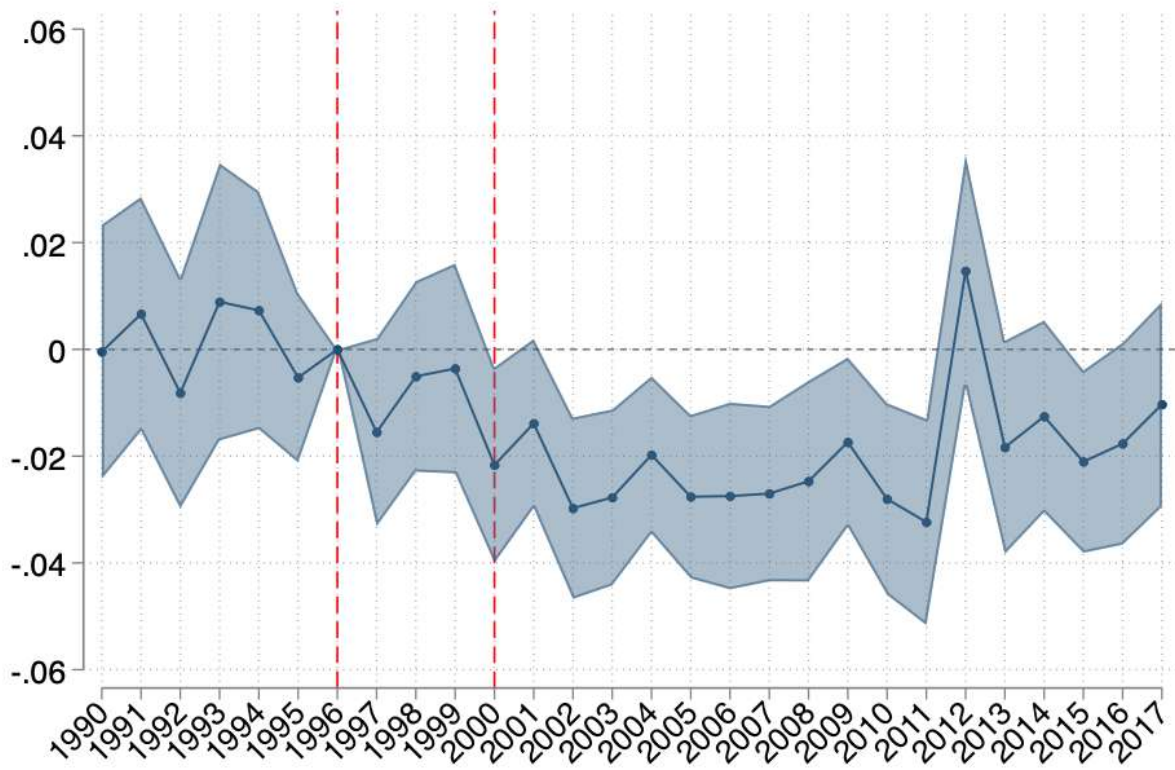
Notes: This figure presents an event study analysis of the impact of TRC media exposure on violence, using specification 1. The dependent variable is the logarithm of the number of conflict events at the municipality level, transformed so that the extensive margin corresponds to a 100% increase (Chen and Roth 2023). All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals, and standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

Figure 5: TRC Immediate Response by Perpetrator's Race
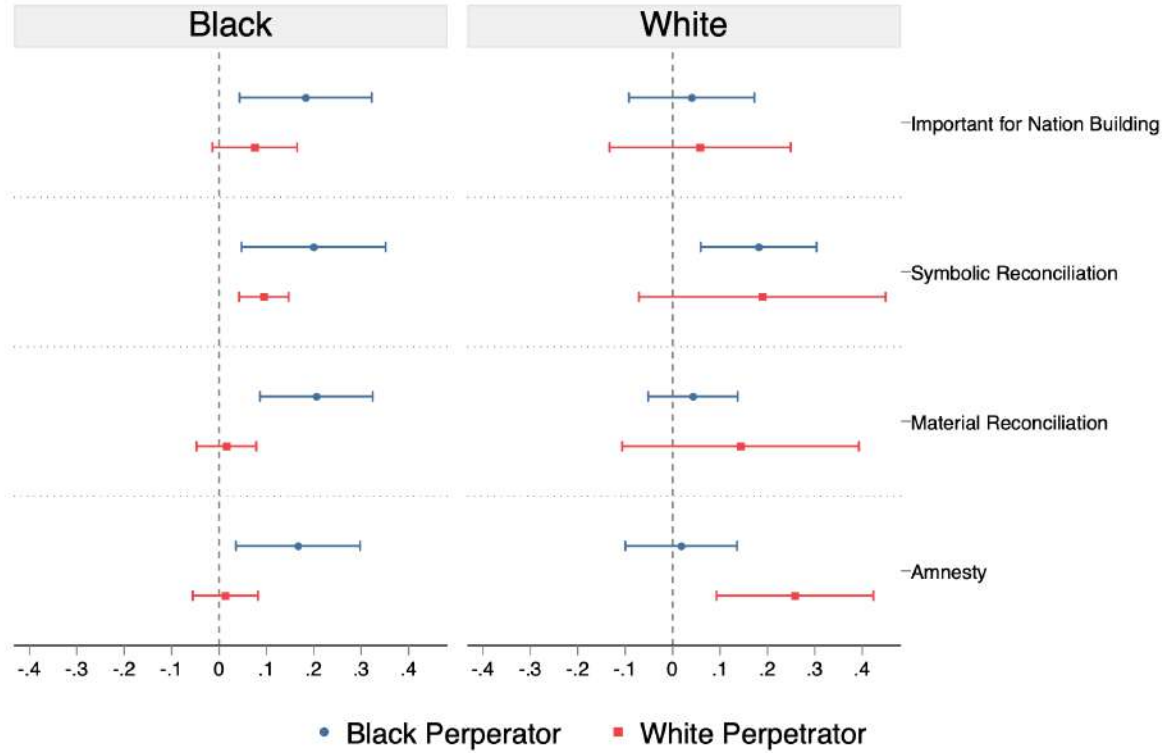
Notes: This figure displays the effects of TRC media exposure on perceptions of the Commission's work and reconciliation by perpetrator race, using specification 4. Race-specific effects are reported as marginal effects from fully interacted models that interact TRC media exposure with race indicators. The sample is split based on whether the hearing predominantly featured Black or White perpetrators (Appendix B.5 explains how we define the race of a perpetrator). Coefficients from hearings with mostly Black perpetrators are shown as circles, while those from hearings with mostly White perpetrators are shown as squares. All specifications control for gender, race, age, age squared, rural residence, and educational attainment. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals, and standard errors are clustered at the suburb level.

Figure 6: High TRC Firms Exert More Bunching at the 10M Treshold
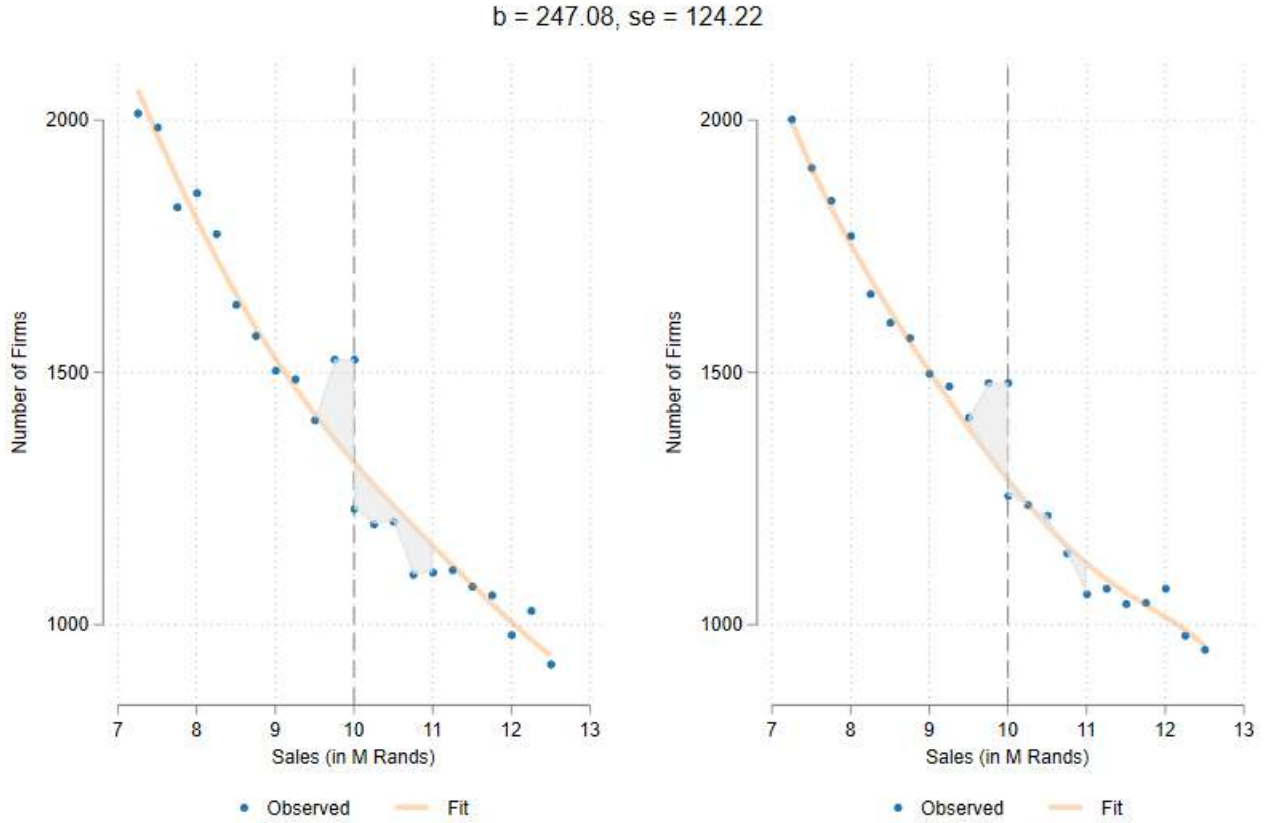
Notes: This figure plots estimated bunching around the ZAR 10 million revenue threshold. The left panel shows firms in areas with high TRC media exposure, and the right panel shows firms in areas with low TRC media exposure; high and low exposure correspond to the top and bottom quartiles of the conditional TRC variation, respectively. The orange line depicts the fitted polynomial, while the shaded gray area represents the estimated excess mass (bunch). Firm location is assigned based on the first location reported over time. The estimated difference in bunching (b) and its standard error (se) are reported above the panels. Standard errors are obtained using a bootstrap procedure with 1,000 replications.

Table 1: TRC Media Reduced Black Interethnic Conflict

| Type of Violence: | Any | Reason for Violence | | Type of Intergroup | | Deaths |
		Intergroup	Other	Intra-Black	Interracial	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
TRC Media × Post	−0.020***	−0.017***	−0.010***	−0.015***	−0.004**	−0.058***
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.002)	(0.014)
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	-0.96	-0.99	-0.97	-0.99	-1.00	-0.95
Adj R^2	0.51	0.16	0.54	0.12	0.12	0.18
Observations	21700	21700	21700	21700	21700	21700

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on violence using specification 1. The geographic unit of observation is the 1996 municipality-year. Column 1 reports effects on the total number of violent events. Columns 2 and 3 split total violence into intergroup violence and non-intergroup violence (e.g., economically motivated events). Columns 4 and 5 further decompose intergroup violence into intra-Black and interracial violence respectively. Column 6 reports effects on the total number of conflict-related casualties. All dependent variables are log-transformed, with the extensive margin normalized to a 100% increase (Chen and Roth 2023). All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table 2: TRC Media Boosts National Identity

Dependent Variable:	National Identity					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
TRC Media	0.021**	0.023***	0.023***	0.023***	0.024***	
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.008)	
TRC Media × Black						0.017**
						(0.009)
TRC Media × White						−0.014
						(0.022)
Geographic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnic		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Socio-Econ			✓	✓	✓	✓
Ind Demo				✓	✓	✓
Ind Ethnic					✓	✓
Race × Wave FE						✓
Race × Muni FE						✓
Muni × Wave FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70
Adj R²	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.12	0.12	0.09
Observations	11059	11059	11059	10983	10983	10907

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on national identity using specification 2. The unit of observation is the suburb in 1996. TRC media exposure is standardized to have mean zero and standard deviation one. The dependent variable is an index constructed from two survey items: (i) whether respondents identify primarily as South African rather than with an ethnic group, and (ii) whether they support the creation of a unified South African nation across groups. Race-specific effects are based on interactions between race indicators and TRC media exposure and are reported as marginal effects from fully interacted models. Column 1 includes geographic controls (average temperature, rainfall, agricultural suitability, distance to the coast and inland water, and their squared terms). Column 2 adds ethnic composition controls as of 1996 (shares of English, Afrikaans, and Zulu speakers, and the Black population share). Column 3 further includes socioeconomic controls as of 1996 (average income score, urbanization, marital status, religious affiliation, and age composition). Column 4 includes individual-level demographics (gender, age, age squared, rural residency, and educational attainment). Column 5 absorbs individual-level ethnicity. Column 6 further absorbs race-by-municipality and race-by-wave fixed effects. All specifications include our baseline set of controls: free-space signal strength; the inverse hyperbolic sine of population, the White population share, and the employment share (all measured in 1996); area, altitude, ruggedness, and their squared terms; and race and municipality-by-wave fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table 3: TRC Media Exposure Increased Racial Residential Segregation

Dependent Variable:	Segregation					
	Racial			Ethnic		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
TRC Media × Post	0.029***	0.029***	0.030***	−0.032***	−0.021*	−0.018
	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.012)
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE		✓	✓		✓	✓
Province × Year FE			✓			✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.45	0.45	0.45
Adj R^2	0.77	0.77	0.78	0.54	0.56	0.56
Observations	2110	2110	2110	2084	2084	2084

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on residential segregation using specification 3. The unit of observation is the 1996 municipality-year. The dependent variable is a dissimilarity index. Columns 1-3 report racial segregation, while Columns 4-6 report intra-Black ethnic segregation. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, as well as the log number of subunits used to compute the segregation index. Columns 2 and 5 additionally include interactions between year fixed effects and demographics as of 1996 (the inverse hyperbolic sine of population, shares of English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa and the Black population share). Columns 3 and 6 further include province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table 4: TRC Reduces Interracial Marriage

Dependent Variable:	Intermarriage · 100							
	Interracial				Interethnic			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
TRC Media × Post	−0.270**	−0.260**	−0.247**	−0.243**	0.546**	0.821***	0.720***	0.574***
	(0.130)	(0.103)	(0.099)	(0.106)	(0.237)	(0.206)	(0.197)	(0.153)
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Muni FE		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Year FE		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE			✓	✓			✓	✓
Province × Year FE				✓				✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	1.56	1.55	1.55	1.55	7.71	7.62	7.62	7.62
Adj R^2	0.02	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.04	0.11	0.11	0.11
Observations	158242	157779	157779	157779	158242	157779	157779	157779

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on intermarriage using specification 3. The unit of observation is the husband, and the sample is restricted to individuals younger than 30. TRC media exposure is measured at the municipality level in 2011 (233 municipalities). The dependent variable is a binary indicator equal to 100 if the spouse belongs to the same racial group (Columns 1-4) or the same ethnic group (Columns 5-8), and zero otherwise. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, as well as controls for race, age, and age squared. Columns 2 and 5 additionally include ethnicity-by-municipality and ethnicity-by-year fixed effects. Columns 3 and 6 further control for interactions between year fixed effects and the 1996 municipality-level shares of Black, English, Afrikaans, and Zulu. Columns 4 and 8 include province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table 5: Bunching Below the 10M Threshold, Panel Evidence

Dependent Variable:	Likelihood Growth to the Next Million				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
TRC × 6M	−0.00452	−0.00491	−0.00726	−0.00452	−0.00783
	(0.0181)	(0.0181)	(0.0179)	(0.0181)	(0.0179)
TRC × 7M	0.0107	0.00910	0.0150	0.00986	0.0125
	(0.0201)	(0.0201)	(0.0200)	(0.0201)	(0.0200)
TRC × 8M	0.000848	−0.00107	0.00496	0.0010	0.00229
	(0.0206)	(0.0207)	(0.0205)	(0.0206)	(0.0207)
TRC × 9M	−0.0463**	−0.0468**	−0.0493**	−0.0468**	−0.0503**
	(0.0216)	(0.0217)	(0.0214)	(0.0215)	(0.0215)
TRC × 10M	−0.00504	−0.00249	−0.00457	−0.00510	−0.00213
	(0.0208)	(0.0207)	(0.0210)	(0.0208)	(0.0208)
TRC × 11M	−0.0130	−0.0129	−0.00916	−0.0136	−0.00890
	(0.0227)	(0.0228)	(0.0227)	(0.0228)	(0.0230)
TRC × 12M	0.0123	0.0119	0.00983	0.0124	0.0100
	(0.0224)	(0.0224)	(0.0224)	(0.0224)	(0.0225)
Firm FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year by Muni FE		✓			✓
Year by Sales FE			✓		✓
Year by Industry FE				✓	✓
R^2	0.190	0.194	0.236	0.192	0.242
Observations	1,203,644	1,203,171	1,198,116	1,203,192	1,197,189

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on firm sales growth using specification 6. The dependent variable is an indicator equal to one if a firm moves up to the next million-ZAR revenue bin between year t and $t + 1$. The coefficients of interest are interactions between residualized TRC media exposure and revenue-bin indicators. All specifications include firm and year fixed effects. Column 2 adds municipality-by-year fixed effects. Column 3 includes revenue-bin-by-year fixed effects. Column 4 adds industry-by-year fixed effects. Column 5 reports the most saturated specification, including all previous fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the firm level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Online Appendix (Not for publication)

Appendix Content

A Additional Exhibits

A.1 Additional Figures

Figure A.1: TRCs Across the World

Notes: The map shows all the countries that have run a Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chad, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chile, Czech Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Fiji, Finland, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Ireland, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritius, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Philippines, Rwanda, Seychelles, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Taiwan, East Timor, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, Uruguay, United States. Source: Hayner (2010); McMaster University (2025); International Center for Transitional Justice (2022).

Figure A.2: South Africa Pre- and Post-1994
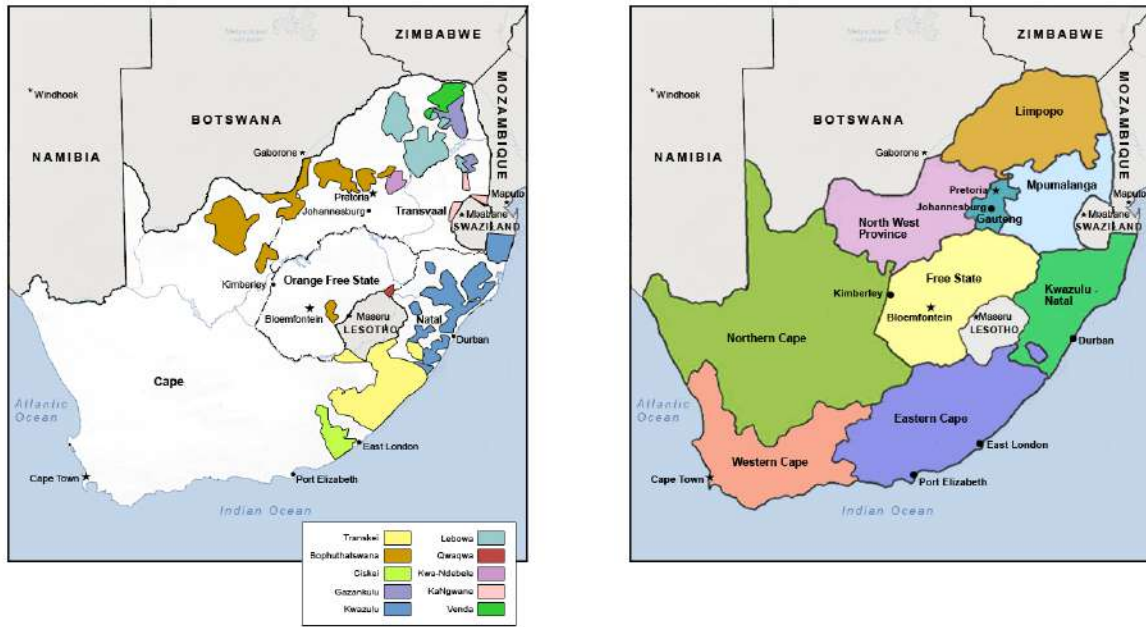
(a) South Africa: Pre-1994, Homelands   **(b)** South Africa: Post-1994, Provinces

Notes: This figure contrasts the administrative geography of South Africa before and after the end of apartheid. Panel (a) depicts the country during the apartheid era, with the "Bantustans" a quasi-self-governing homelands created to enforce ethnic and racial segregation. Panel (b) shows the new provincial structure established following the first democratic elections in 1994, in which the Bantustans were dissolved and reincorporated into a unified Republic of South Africa. Source: MATRIX, Michigan State University.

Figure A.3: Frequency of Media Source Consumption
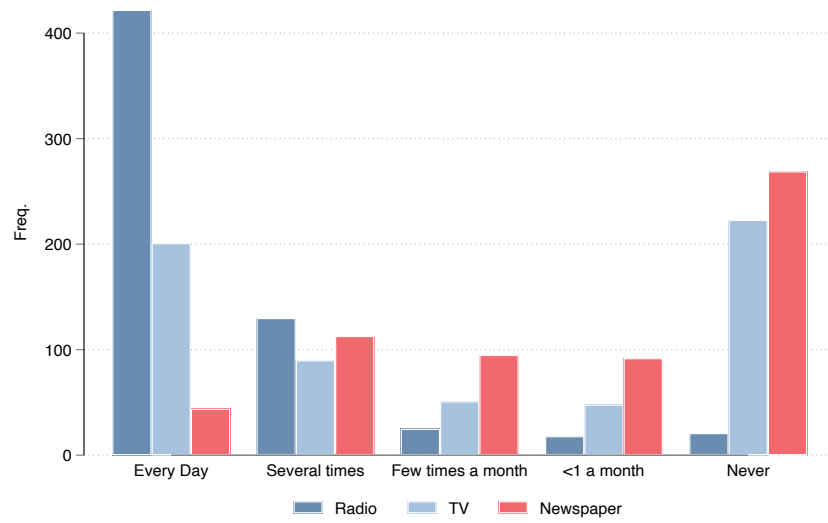
(a) Rural
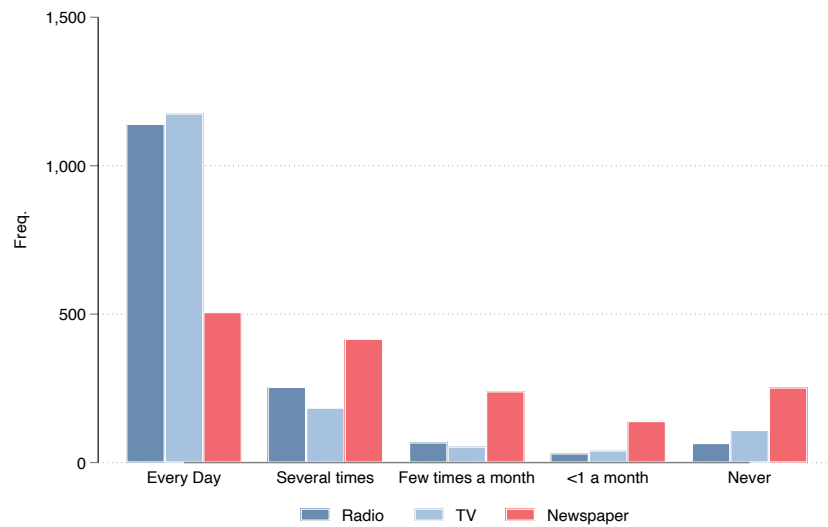
(b) Urban

Notes: This graph shows the frequency of use of different media sources for rural (panel a) and urban suburbs (panel b). The data comes from the first round (2000) of the Afrobarometer survey. The exact question we employ states: "How often do you get news from the following sources?"

Figure A.4: Location of Afrobarometer Clusters
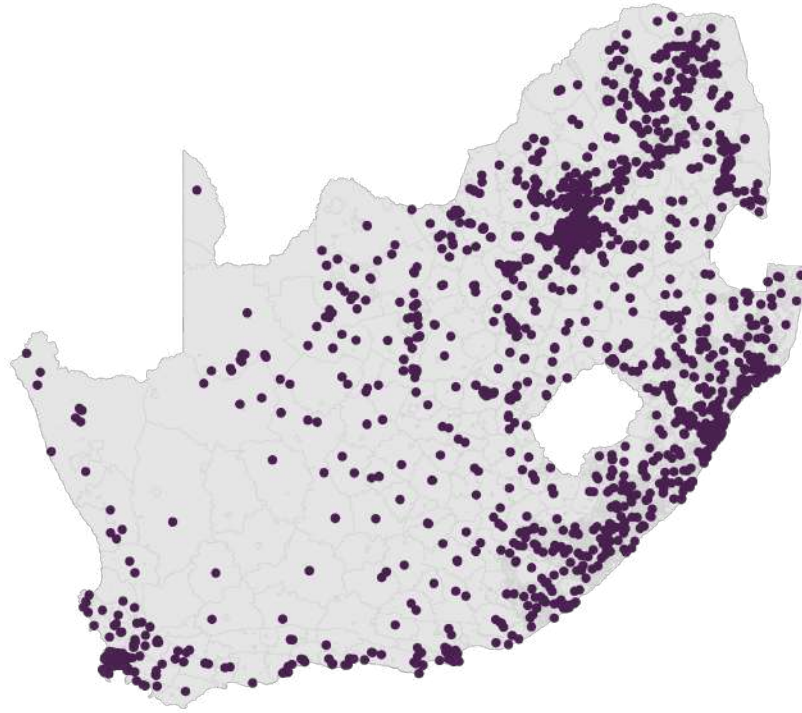
Notes: The map plots the location of Afrobarometer's clusters for waves one to six (purple dots). Boundaries in the background represent 1996 suburb boundaries.

Figure A.5: TRC Media Coverage Balance Test, Compare with Unconditional Variation
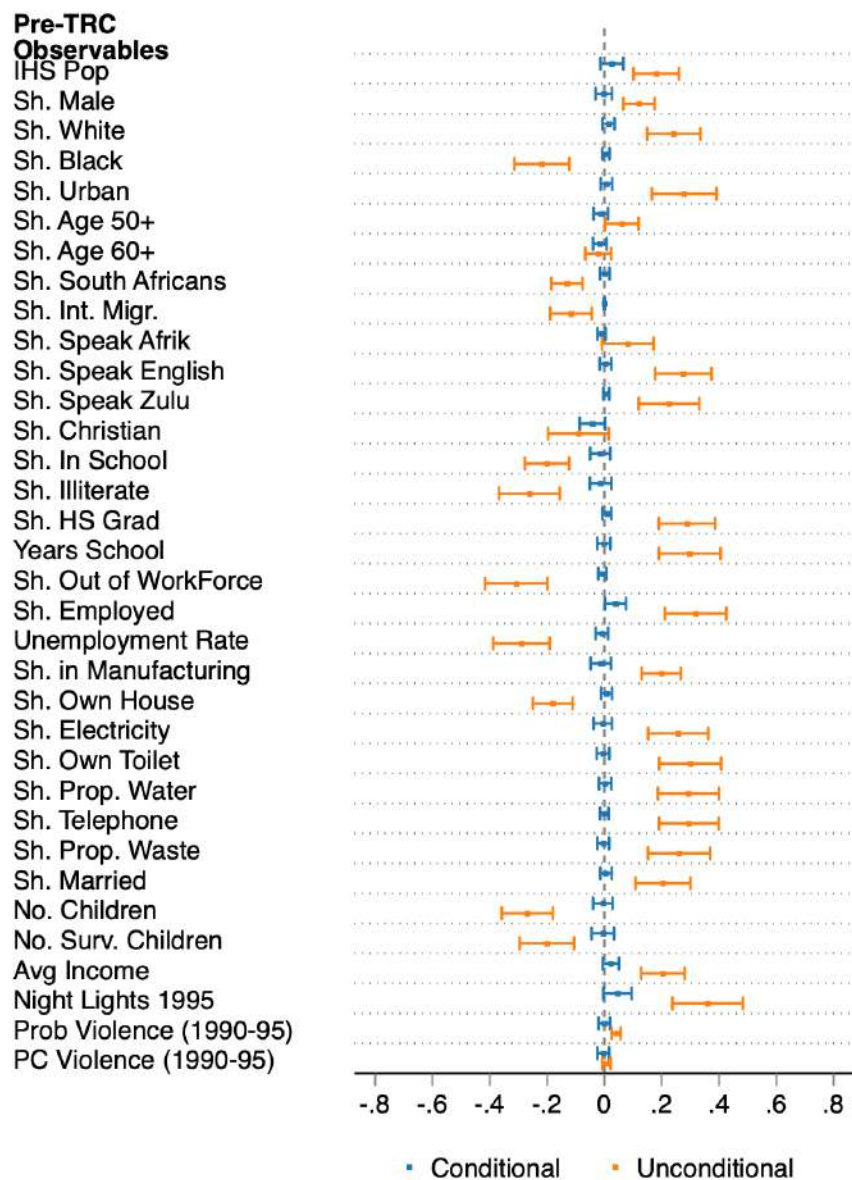
Notes: This figure presents balance tests of TRC media exposure on predetermined suburb-level character-istics. Each coefficient comes from a separate regression of the variable listed on the y-axis on TRC media exposure; both dependent and independent variables are standardized. Points denote coefficient estimates and bars indicate 95% confidence intervals. The blue markers correspond to our baseline identified specifica-tion, which includes the TRC free-space signal, 1996 population, shares White and employed, area, altitude, ruggedness (and their squared terms), and municipality fixed effects. The orange markers show the effect of the naive raw variation in TRC media exposure. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

Figure A.6: TRC Media Exposure Balance Test
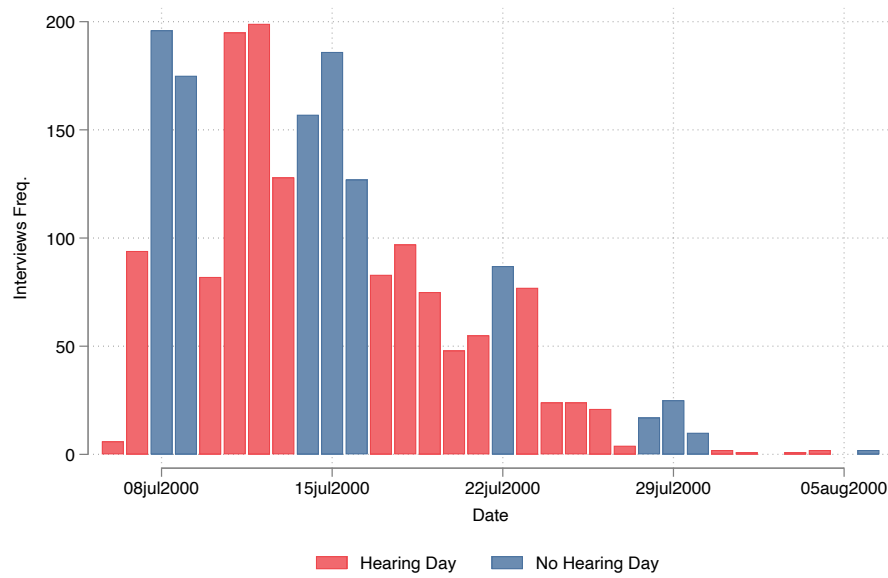
Notes: This figure shows the overlap between Afrobarometer survey interview dates and days on which TRC amnesty hearings took place during June-August 2000.

Figure A.7: TRC Media Exposure Balance Test
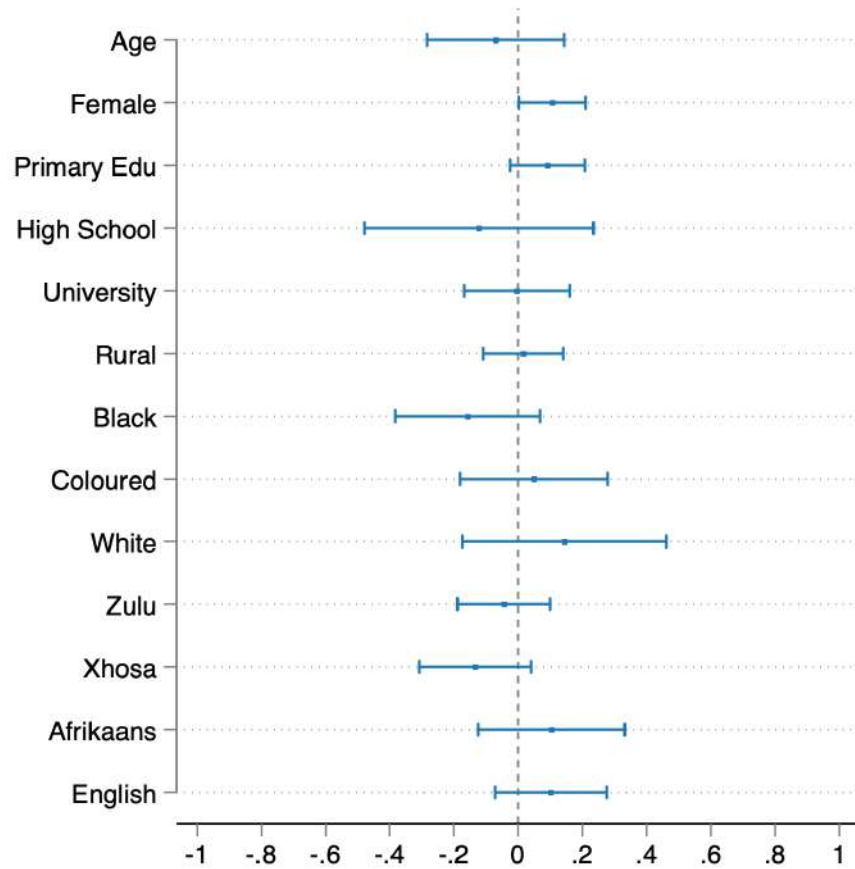
Notes: This figure presents balance tests for the salience analysis using specification 4. Each coefficient comes from a separate regression of the variable listed on the y-axis on TRC media exposure interacted with an indicator for a hearing day. Standard errors are clustered at the suburb level.

Figure A.8: Heterogeneous Impact of TRC on Identity Markers by Race

(a) Proud of Being SA

(b) Proud of Your Identity

(c) *Best* Identity

(d) Identity *Very Different*
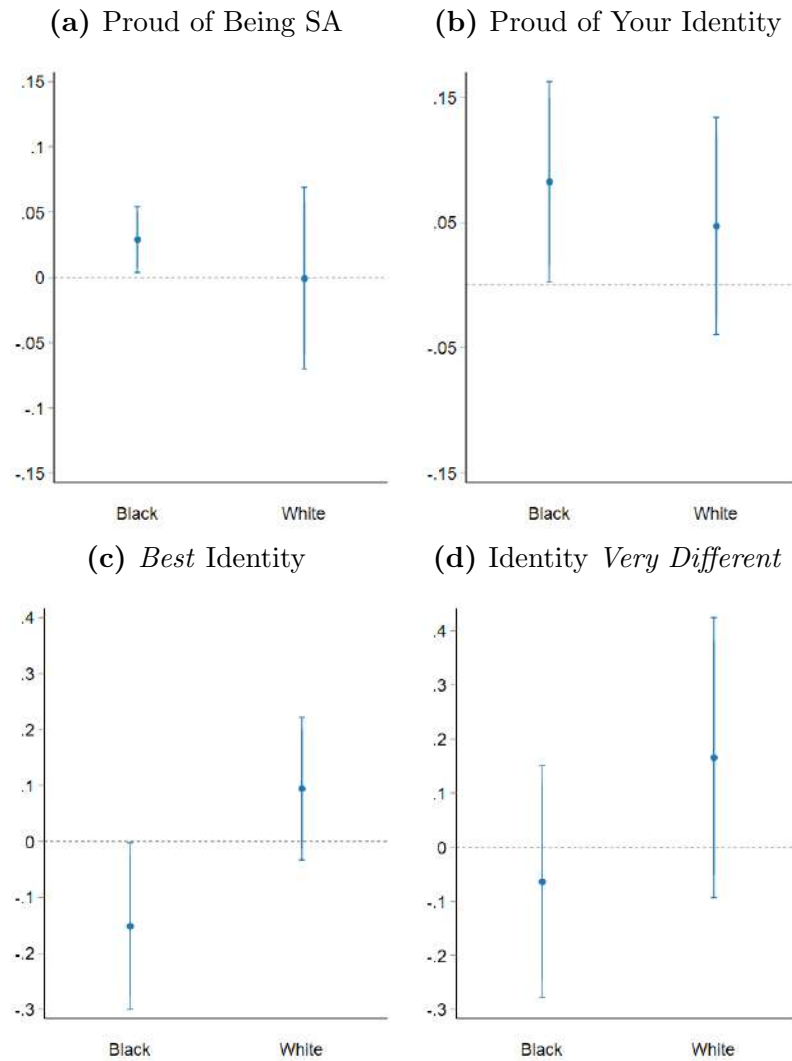
Note: This figure plots the estimated effects of TRC media exposure on additional Afrobarometer survey measures of identity. The outcomes are indicators for: pride in being South African (panel a), pride in belonging to one's group (panel b), agreement that one's group is the best in the country (panel c), and agreement that one's group is very different from others in the country (panel d). Both dependent and independent variables are standardized. Race-specific effects are reported as marginal effects from fully interacted models that interact TRC media exposure with race indicators. See Table 2, Column 6 for a full description of the control variables. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals, and standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

Figure A.9: Intergroup Contact Results
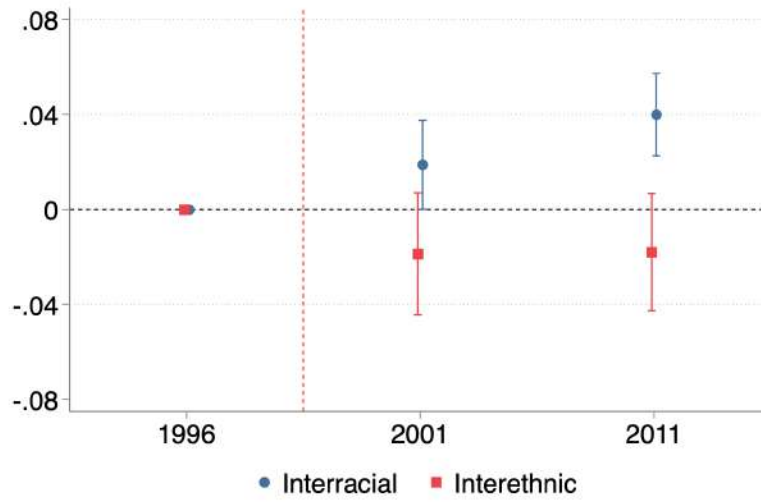
(a) Segregation
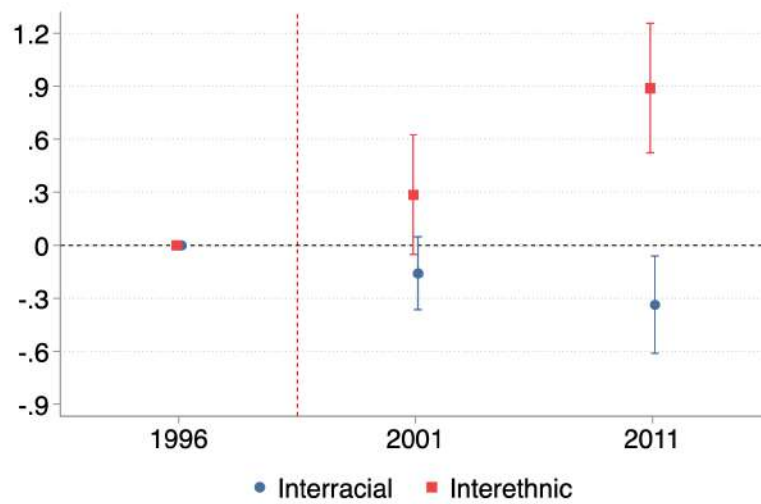
(b) Intermarriage

Notes: This figure displays the estimated effects of TRC media exposure on residential segregation (panel a) and intermarriage (panel b). Coefficients are obtained from specifications that interact TRC media exposure with year indicators, omitting 1996 as the reference year. The estimates correspond to the most saturated specifications reported in Tables 3 and 4. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals, and standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

Figure A.10: Randomization Test of Hearing Dates

(a) Important for Nation Building

(b) Understand Each Other

(c) Forgive Each Other

(d) Forget the Past

(e) Healing Memories

(f) One's Contribution

(g) Material Compensation

(h) Amnesty
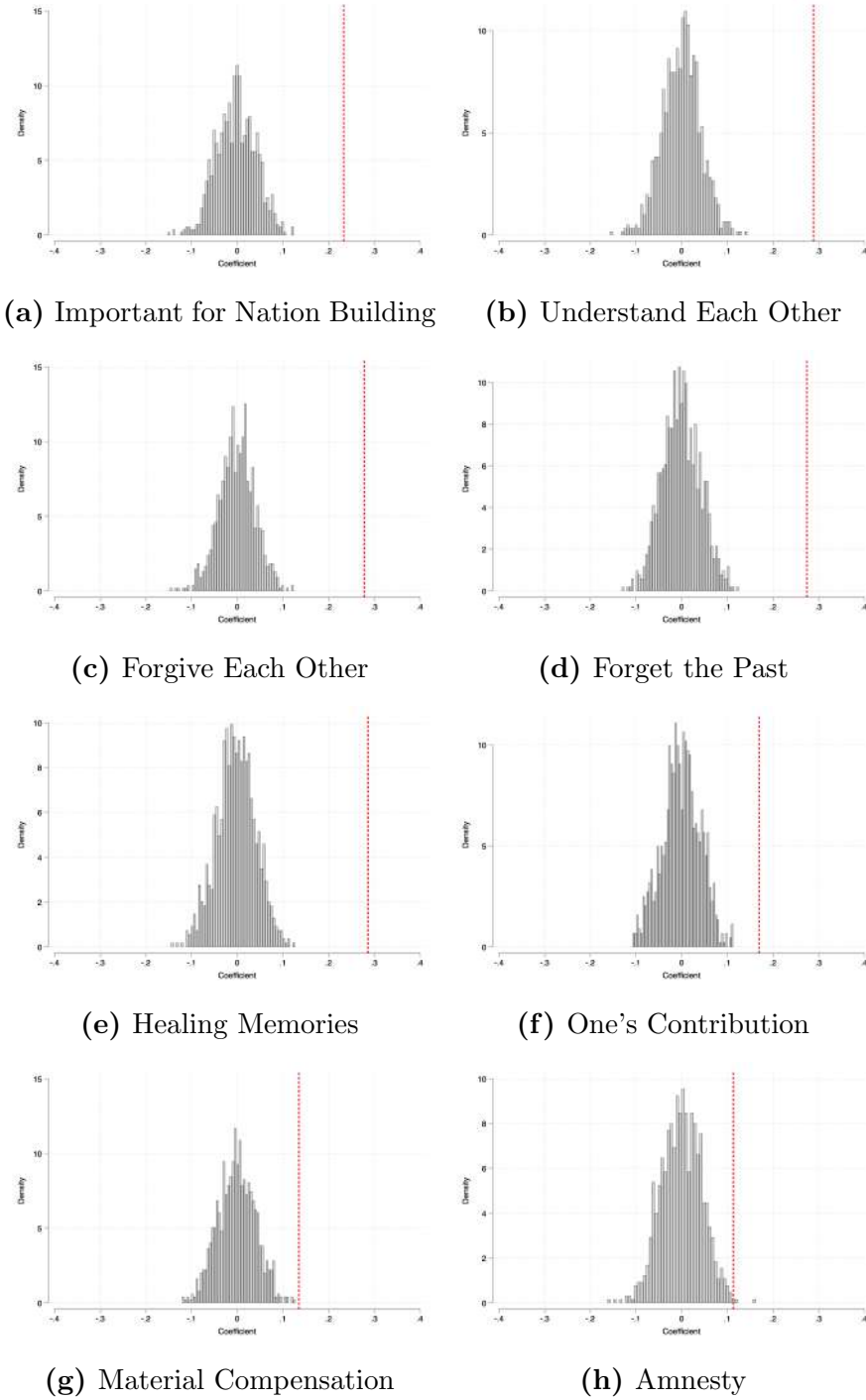
Notes: The figure plots the results of a randomization test where we randomly shuffle the exact date of the TRC hearings 1,000 times. We plot the distribution of the estimated effects for each of the eight outcomes in the salience analysis, next to the estime we obtain in the original data (red dotted vertical line). The exact specification used is the same as in Figure 3 and displayed in equation 4. Standard errors clustered at the suburb level.

Figure A.11: The Effect of TRC Media Exposure on Per Capita Violence, Event Study
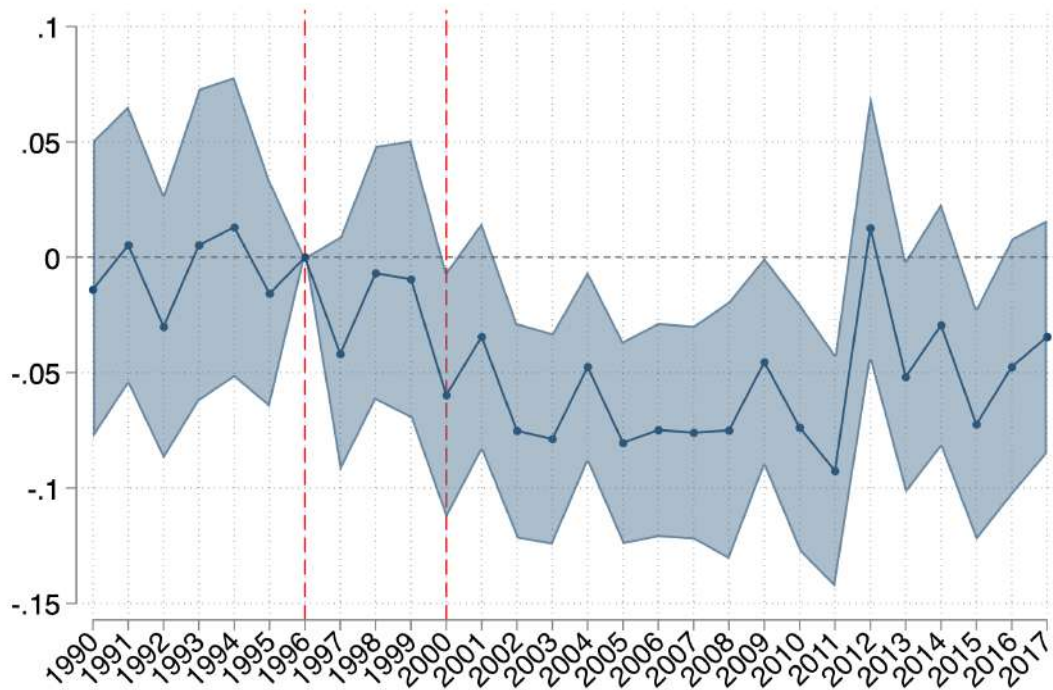
Notes: This figure presents an event-study analysis of the impact of TRC media exposure on violence, using specification 1. The dependent variable is the logarithm of the per capita number of conflict events at the municipality level, transformed so that the extensive margin corresponds to a 100% increase (Chen and Roth 2023). All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals, and standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

Figure A.12: The Effect of TRC Media Exposure on IHS Violence, Event Study
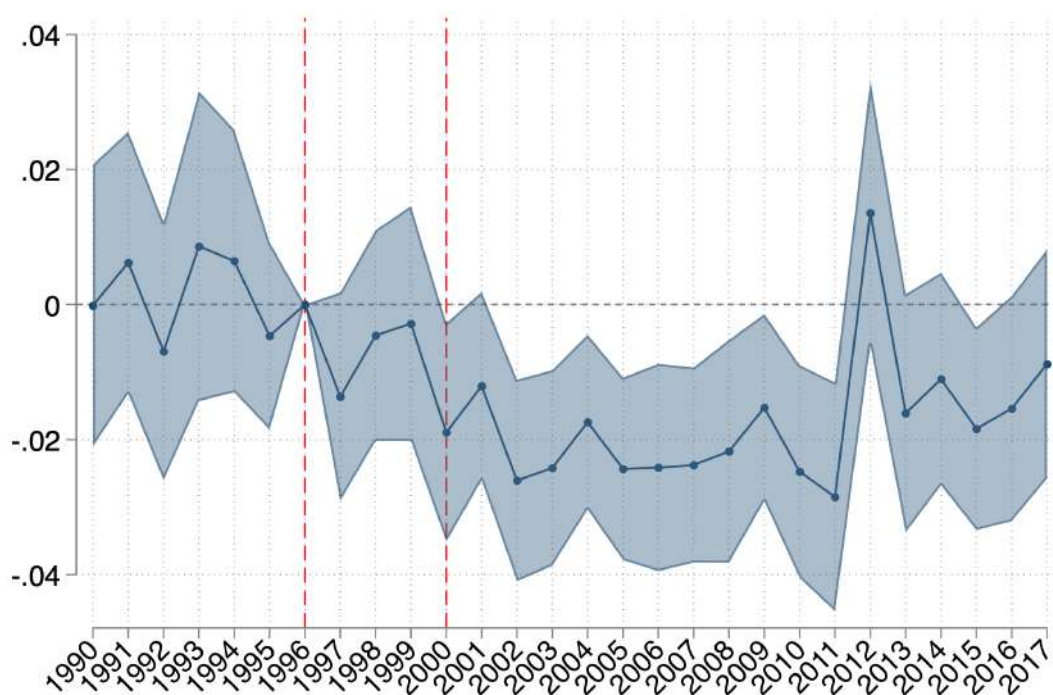
Notes: This figure presents an event-study analysis of the impact of TRC media exposure on violence, using specification 1. The dependent variable is the inverse hyperbolic sine transformation of the number of conflict events at the municipality level. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals, and standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

Figure A.13: TRC Media Exposure and the Extensive Margin of Violence, Event Study
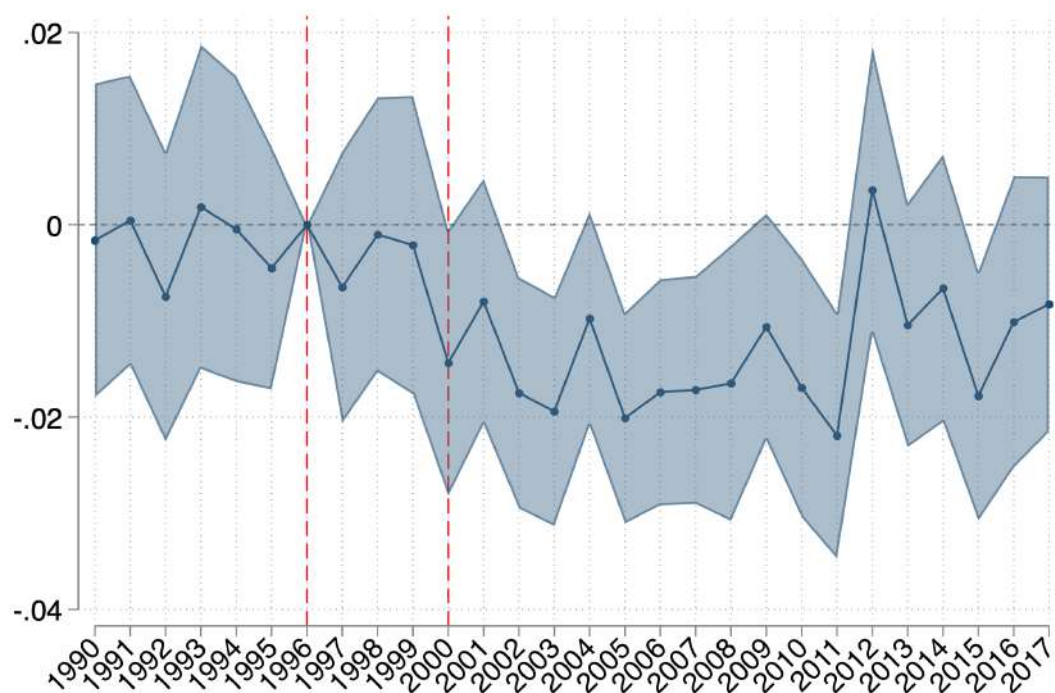
Notes: This figure presents an event-study analysis of the impact of TRC media exposure on the extensive margin of violence, using specification 1. The dependent variable is an indicator equal to one for any conflict present at the municipality level. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals, and standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

Figure A.14: The Effect of Discrete TRC Media Exposure on Violence, Event Study
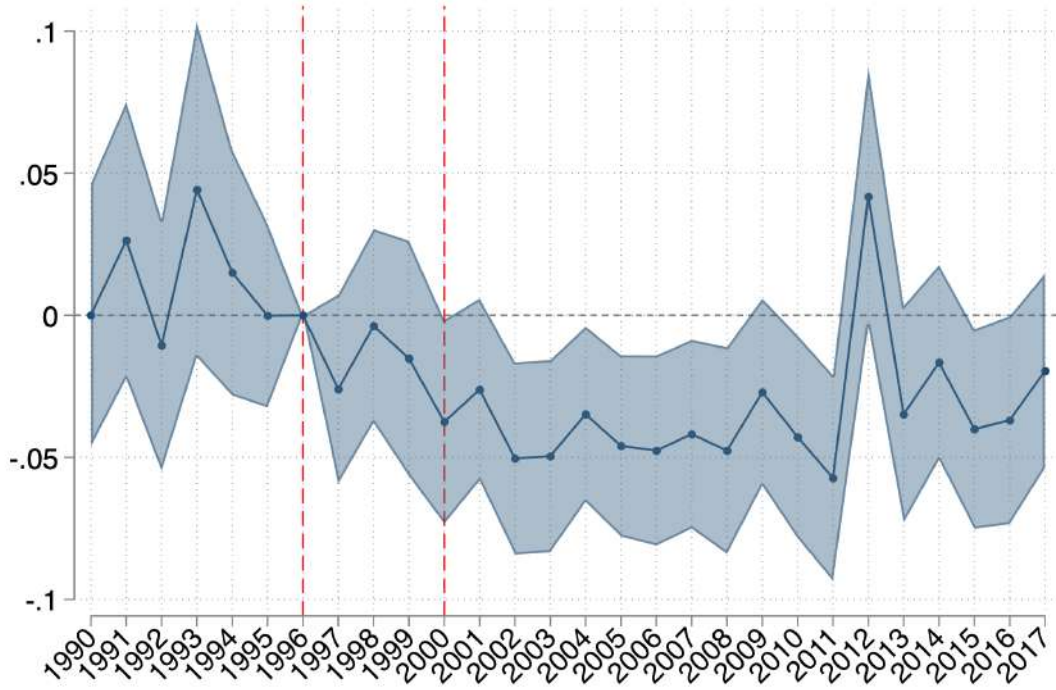
Notes: This figure presents an event-study analysis of the impact of TRC media exposure on violence, following De Chaisemartin and d'Haultfoeuille (2024). The dependent variable is the logarithm of the per capita number of conflict events at the municipality level, transformed so that the extensive margin corresponds to a 100% increase (Chen and Roth 2023). TRC media exposure is discretized to equal one if a municipality's signal reception is above the mean, and zero otherwise. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals, and standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

Figure A.15: TRC Immediate Response Without Ethnic Bias
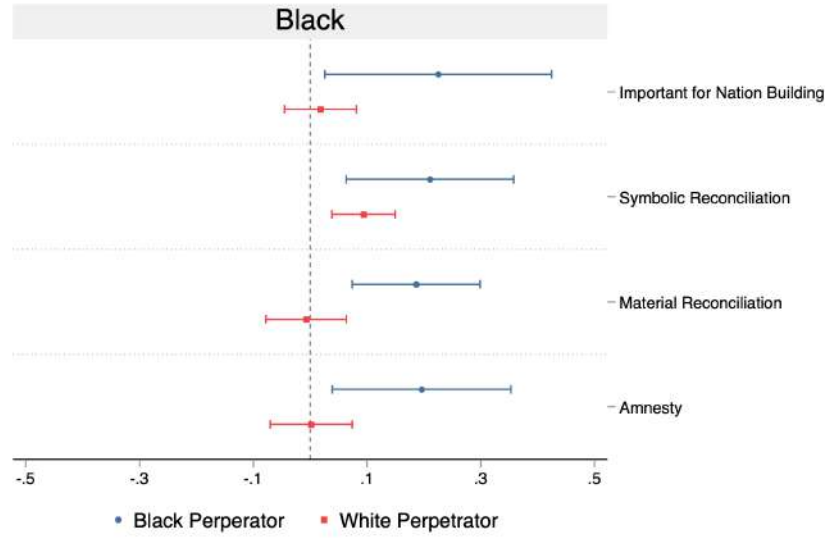
(a) Dropping Individuals
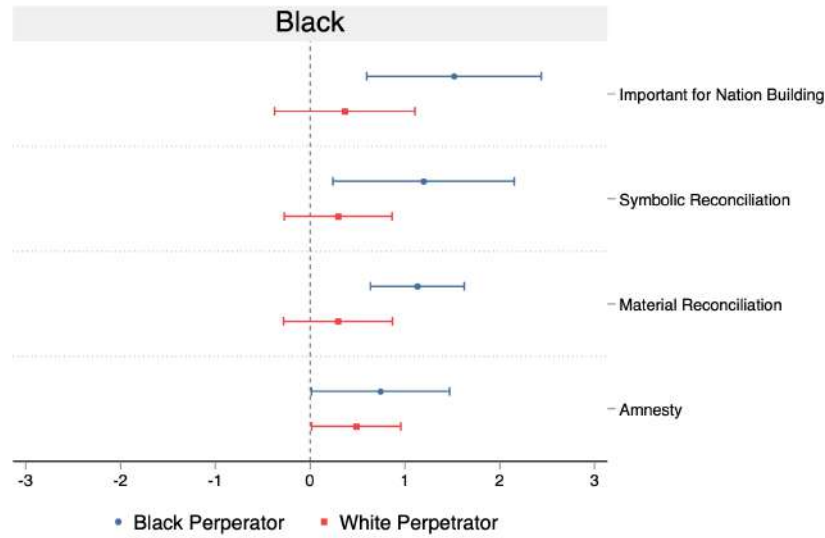
(b) Dropping Perpetrators

Notes: This figure plots the impact of TRC media exposure on perceptions of the Commission's work and reconciliation by perpetrator race, using specification 4. The treatment variable is interacted with respondents' race, and the sample is split according to whether the hearing predominantly featured Black or White perpetrators (see Appendix B.5). Reported coefficients correspond to marginal effects for Black respondents only. Estimates from hearings with mostly Black perpetrators are shown as circles, while those from hearings with mostly White perpetrators are shown as squares. Panel (a) restricts the sample to Black respondents who do not belong to the Zulu or Xhosa ethnic groups; Panel (b) restricts the sample to hearings featuring Black perpetrators who do not belong to the Zulu or Xhosa groups. All specifications control for gender, race, age, age squared, rural residency, and highest educational attainment. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals, and standard errors are clustered at the suburb level.

Figure A.16: Predicted Theme Count per Testimony Length by Perpetrators' Race

(a) Violence

(b) Reconciliation
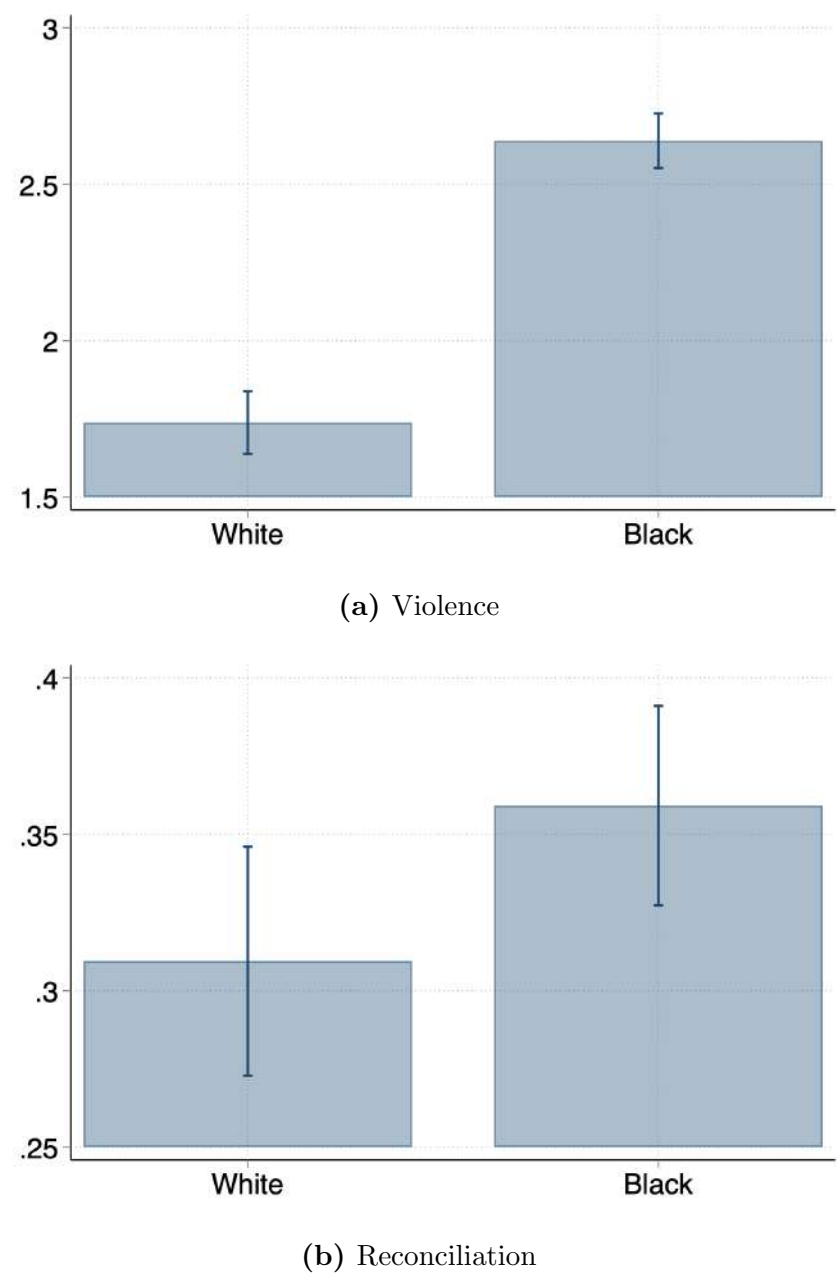
Notes: The figure plots the average predicted number of theme-related word per length of testimony for White and Black applicants. The model includes month-year fixed effects. Confidence intervals are shown at the 95% level.

Figure A.17: The Immediate Reaction to TRC Hearings by TRC Victims Presence
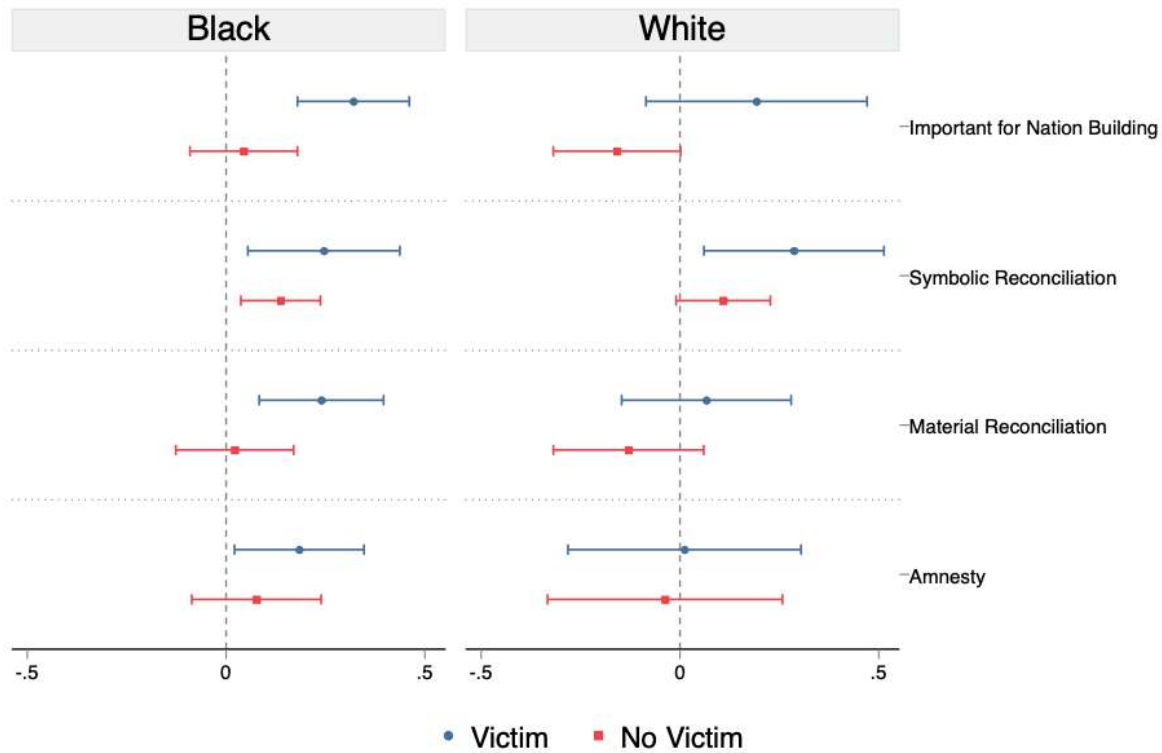
Notes: This figure plots the impact of TRC media exposure on perceptions of the Commission's work and reconciliation by the presence of apartheid victims, using specification 4. Race-specific effects are reported as marginal effects from fully interacted models that interact TRC media exposure with race indicators. The sample is split based on whether respondents resided in a suburb in which at least one political victim was registered by the TRC. All specifications control for gender, race, age, age squared, rural residency, and highest educational attainment. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals, and standard errors are clustered at the suburb level.

Figure A.18: High TRC Firms Exert More Bunching, 2018 Location

Notes: This figure plots estimated bunching around the ZAR 10 million revenue threshold. The left panel shows firms in areas with high TRC media exposure, and the right panel shows firms in areas with low TRC media exposure; high and low exposure correspond to the top and bottom quartiles of the conditional TRC variation, respectively. The orange line depicts the fitted polynomial, while the shaded gray area represents the estimated excess mass (bunch). Firm location is assigned based on the location reported in 2018. The estimated difference in bunching (b) and its standard error (se) are reported above the panels. Standard errors are obtained using a bootstrap procedure with 1,000 replications.

Figure A.19: High TRC Firms Exert More Bunching, Symmetric Window and First Location

Notes: This figure plots estimated bunching around the ZAR 10 million revenue threshold. The left panel shows firms in areas with high TRC media exposure, and the right panel shows firms in areas with low TRC media exposure; high and low exposure correspond to the top and bottom quartiles of the conditional TRC variation, respectively. The orange line depicts the fitted polynomial, while the shaded gray area represents the estimated excess mass (bunch). Firm location is assigned based on the location reported in 2018. The estimated difference in bunching (b) and its standard error (se) are reported above the panels. Standard errors are obtained using a bootstrap procedure with 1,000 replications.

Figure A.20: High TRC Firms Exert More Bunching, Symmetric Window and 2018 Location
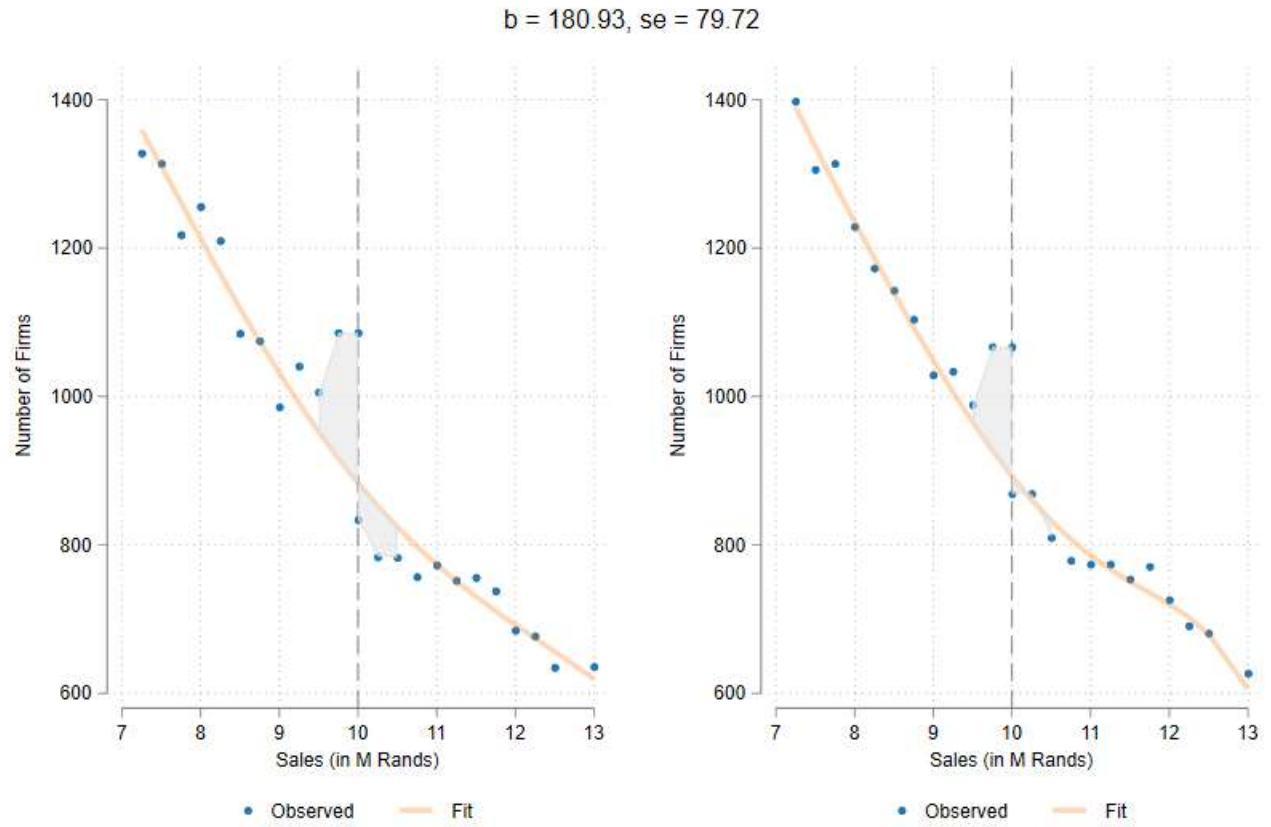
Notes: The Figure plots the estimated bunch around the 10M threshold. The left panel presents high TRC sample, and the right panel presents low TRC sample. High and low samples correspond to the bottom and top quartiles of the conditional TRC variation, respectively. The orange line presents the polynomial fit, and the gray area presents the size of the bunch. The location of the firm is assigned as the location reported in 2018. The estimated difference (b) and standard error (se) reported above the graph. Standard error is obtained via a bootstrap procedure with 1,000 iterations.

A.2 Additional Tables

Table A.1: Descriptive Statistics – Main Independent and Control Variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	N. Obs
Main Independent and Control Variables, Suburb Sample					
TRC Media	-58.78	21.40	-90.00	-11.46	11120
Population	3395.40	8291.57	2.00	309828.00	11120
Share Male	0.47	0.06	0.02	1.00	11120
Share Black	0.81	0.34	0.00	1.00	11120
Share White	0.11	0.26	0.00	1.00	11120
Share Christians	0.75	0.19	0.00	1.00	11120
Share English	0.07	0.18	0.00	1.00	11120
Share Afrikaans	0.11	0.26	0.00	1.00	11120
Share Zulu	0.22	0.38	0.00	1.00	11120
Share Urban	0.31	0.46	0.00	1.00	11120
Share Aged 60+	0.08	0.05	0.00	0.88	11120
Share Married	0.25	0.11	0.00	1.00	11120
Share SA Citizens	0.99	0.03	0.12	1.00	11120
Share Employed	0.18	0.19	0.00	1.00	11120
Average Income Group	3.22	2.43	1.00	15.00	11120
Share Manufacturing	0.07	0.10	0.00	1.00	11120
Altitude	13.91	4.42	1.00	23.00	11120
Ruggedness	7.85	5.43	0.00	38.19	11120
Mean Temperature	18.25	1.99	11.84	22.88	11120
Mean Precipitations	725.85	204.36	61.53	1162.53	11120
Mean Agricultural Suitability	2.79	1.27	0.00	8.00	11120
Area	1.07e+08	1.11e+09	1709.66	5.14e+10	11120
Dist. River	4599.47	5354.28	0.24	58512.69	11120
Dist. Lakes	33970.70	30408.11	0.00	380199.57	11120
Dist. Coast	260181.79	224540.33	75.66	812387.85	11120

Notes: Descriptive statistics of the main independent and control variables used in the analysis.

Table A.2: Descriptive Statistics – Main Outcome Variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	N. Obs
Afrobarometer Outcomes, Individual Sample					
Share Black	0.70	0.46	0.00	1.00	13052
Share White	0.13	0.34	0.00	1.00	13052
Share Coloured	0.12	0.33	0.00	1.00	13052
Female	0.50	0.50	0.00	1.00	13052
Age	37.85	14.10	18.00	99.00	13052
Share Rural	0.16	0.36	0.00	1.00	13052
At least Primary Education	0.90	0.29	0.00	1.00	13052
At least Secondary Education	0.60	0.49	0.00	1.00	13052
National Identity (Index)	0.70	0.32	0.00	1.00	10985
Feel SA	0.58	0.49	0.00	1.00	10985
United SA	0.83	0.38	0.00	1.00	13052
Child SA	0.88	0.32	0.00	1.00	13052
Proud SA	0.88	0.32	0.00	1.00	10858
Best Group	0.64	0.48	0.00	1.00	2067
Identity V. Different	0.50	0.50	0.00	1.00	2067
Proud Group	0.92	0.27	0.00	1.00	2067
TRC Important Nat. Build.	0.66	0.47	0.00	1.00	2067
Understand Each Other	0.74	0.44	0.00	1.00	2067
Forgive Each Other	0.78	0.42	0.00	1.00	2067
Forget the Past	0.66	0.47	0.00	1.00	2067
Heal Memories	0.70	0.46	0.00	1.00	2067
Own Contribution	0.72	0.45	0.00	1.00	2067
Material Compensation	0.59	0.49	0.00	1.00	2067
Amnesty	0.61	0.49	0.00	1.00	2067
Violence Outcomes, Muni-Year Sample					
Share Violence	0.02	0.15	0.00	1.00	21700
Violence pc	15.04	168.34	0.00	6759.73	21700
Ethnic Violence pc	4.31	80.47	0.00	5407.79	21700
Fatalities	0.35	8.86	0.00	566.00	21700
Intergroup Contact Outcomes, Muni- and Individual-Decade Samples					
Interracial Marriage (%)	1.55	12.34	0.00	100.00	157779
Interethnic Marriage (%)	7.62	26.53	0.00	100.00	157779
Racial Diss. Index	0.68	0.24	0.00	1.00	2110
Racial Gini Index	0.76	0.23	0.00	1.00	2110
Racial Thiel Index	0.44	0.24	0.00	0.97	2110
Ethnic Diss. Index	0.45	0.23	0.00	1.00	2090
Ethnic Gini Index	0.54	0.24	0.00	1.00	2090
Ethnic Thiel Index	0.22	0.17	0.00	1.00	2090

Notes: Descriptive statistics of the main dependent variables used in the analysis. Violence per capita outcomes are expressed in millions.

Table A.3: TRC Media Exposure and Radio Consumption

Dependent Variable:	Listen To Radio			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
TRC Media	0.216*	0.267**	0.309***	
	(0.125)	(0.106)	(0.108)	
– × Black				0.366***
				(0.116)
– × White				0.214*
				(0.117)
Geographic	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnic		✓	✓	✓
Socio-Econ			✓	✓
Ind Demo				✓
Ind Ethnic				✓
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72
Adj R^2	0.09	0.10	0.10	0.11
Observations	2076	2076	2076	2064

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on radio listenership using specification 2. The unit of observation is the suburb in 1996, and the data come from the first wave of the Afrobarometer survey. The dependent variable is an indicator equal to one if the respondent reports listening to the radio often. TRC media exposure is standardized to have mean zero and standard deviation one. Race-specific effects are based on interactions between race indicators and TRC media exposure and are reported as marginal effects from fully interacted models. Column 1 includes geographic controls (average temperature, rainfall, agricultural suitability, distance to the coast and inland water, and their squared terms). Column 2 adds ethnic composition controls as of 1996 (shares of English, Afrikaans, and Zulu speakers, and the Black population share). Column 3 further includes socioeconomic controls as of 1996 (average income score, urbanization, marital status, religious affiliation, and age composition). Column 4 includes individual-level demographics (gender, age, age squared, rural residency, and educational attainment) and individual-level ethnicity. All specifications include our baseline set of controls: free-space signal strength; the inverse hyperbolic sine of population, the White population share, and the employment share (all measured in 1996); area, altitude, ruggedness, and their squared terms; and race and municipality-by-wave fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.4: TRC Media Exposure and Violence Controlling for Alternative Media

Dependent Variable:	Log Violent Events			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
TRC Media × Post	−0.020***	−0.020***	−0.019***	−0.019***
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Radio Coverage × Post		−0.000		0.000
		(0.002)		(0.003)
TV Coverage × Post			−0.001	−0.001
			(0.004)	(0.004)
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	-0.96	-0.96	-0.96	-0.96
Adj R²	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51
Observations	21700	21700	21700	21700

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on violence using specification 1, controlling for alternative radio and TV coverage. See Appendix B.1 for details on these media outlets. The unit of observation is the 1996 municipality-year. The dependent variable is the logarithm of the number of conflict events at the municipality level, transformed so that the extensive margin corresponds to a 100% increase (Chen and Roth 2023). Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 adds coverage of SABC radio outlets that broadcast TRC-related content. Column 3 adds coverage of major television stations. Column 4 includes both radio and television coverage. All coverage measures are interacted with a post-period indicator. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.5: TRC Media Exposure and National Identity Controlling for Alternative Media

Dependent Variable:	National Identity			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
TRC Media	0.024***	0.021***	0.025***	0.022***
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.008)
Radio Coverage		0.008		0.008
		(0.005)		(0.005)
TV Coverage			−0.003	−0.002
			(0.011)	(0.011)
Geographic	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnic	✓	✓	✓	✓
Socio-Econ	✓	✓	✓	✓
Individual	✓	✓	✓	✓
Muni × Wave FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70
Adj R^2	0.12	0.13	0.12	0.12
Observations	10983	10983	10983	10983

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on national identity using specification 2, controlling for alternative radio and television coverage. See Appendix B.1 for details on these media outlets. The unit of observation is the individual. TRC media exposure is standardized to have mean zero and standard deviation one. The dependent variable is a national-identity index constructed by pooling Afrobarometer waves 1-6 and extracting the first principal component of two survey items: (i) whether respondents identify primarily as South African rather than with an ethnic group, and (ii) whether they support building a unified South African nation across groups. Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 adds coverage of SABC radio outlets that broadcast TRC-related content. Column 3 adds coverage of major television stations. Column 4 includes both radio and television coverage. All specifications include the same set of controls: baseline suburb-level characteristics (free-space signal strength for each media outlet; the inverse hyperbolic sine of population, the White population share, and the employment share, all as of 1996; area, altitude, ruggedness, and their squared terms); geographic characteristics (temperature, rainfall, agricultural suitability, distance to the coast and inland water, and squared terms); ethnic composition as of 1996 (shares of English, Afrikaans, and Zulu speakers and the Black population share); socioeconomic characteristics as of 1996 (income score, urbanization, marital status, religious affiliation, and age composition); and all individual-level controls (gender, race, age, age squared, rural residency, educational attainment, and ethnic origin). All regressions include municipality-by-wave fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.6: TRC Media Exposure and Segregation Controlling for Alternative Media

Dependent Variable:	Segregation							
	Racial				Ethnic			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
TRC Media × Post	0.030***	0.025***	0.029***	0.025***	−0.018	−0.025**	−0.016	−0.023*
	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.012)	(0.013)
Radio Coverage × Post		0.016**		0.016*		0.022*		0.025**
		(0.008)		(0.008)		(0.011)		(0.011)
TV Coverage × Post			0.004	0.001			−0.011	−0.017
			(0.007)	(0.008)			(0.012)	(0.012)
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Province × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45
Adj R^2	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56
Observations	2110	2110	2110	2110	2084	2084	2084	2084

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on residential segregation using specification 3, controlling for alternative radio and television coverage. See Appendix B.1 for details on these media outlets. The unit of observation is the 1996 municipality-year. The dependent variable is a dissimilarity index. Columns 1-4 report racial segregation, while Columns 5-8 report intra-Black ethnic segregation. Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 adds coverage of SABC radio outlets that broadcast TRC-related content. Column 3 adds coverage of major television stations. Column 4 includes both radio and television coverage. All coverage measures are interacted with a post-period indicator. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, the log number of suburbs used to compute the segregation index, interactions between year fixed effects and demographics as of 1996 (shares of English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa and the Black population share), and province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.7: TRC Media Exposure and Intermarriage Controlling for Alternative Media

Dependent Variable:	Intermarriage · 100							
	Racial				Ethnic			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
TRC Media × Post	−0.243**	−0.239**	−0.253**	−0.250**	0.574***	0.558***	0.542***	0.531***
	(0.106)	(0.106)	(0.112)	(0.111)	(0.153)	(0.157)	(0.158)	(0.161)
Radio Coverage × Post		−0.064		−0.068		0.235		0.224
		(0.069)		(0.069)		(0.184)		(0.185)
TV Coverage × Post			0.050	0.057			0.166	0.143
			(0.106)	(0.106)			(0.151)	(0.152)
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Province × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	1.55	1.55	1.55	1.55	7.62	7.62	7.62	7.62
Adj R^2	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11
Observations	157779	157779	157779	157779	157779	157779	157779	157779

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on intermarriage using specification 3, controlling for alternative radio and television coverage. See Appendix B.1 for details on these media outlets. The unit of observation is the husband, and the sample is restricted to individuals younger than 30. TRC media exposure is measured at the municipality level in 2011 (233 municipalities). The dependent variable is a binary indicator equal to 100 if the spouse belongs to the same racial group (Columns 1-4) or the same ethnic group (Columns 5-8), and zero otherwise. Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 adds coverage of SABC radio outlets that broadcast TRC-related content. Column 3 adds coverage of major television stations. Column 4 includes both radio and television coverage. All coverage measures are interacted with a post-period indicator. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, as well as controls for race, age, and age squared; ethnicity-by-municipality and ethnicity-by-year fixed effects; interactions between year fixed effects and the 1996 municipality-level shares of Black, English, Afrikaans, and Zulu; and province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.8: TRC Media and Violence Omitting Municipality with Antennas

Dependent Variable:	Violent Events				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
TRC Media × Post	−0.020***	−0.016***	−0.016***	−0.014***	−0.013***
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Exclude Muni with Tx					
Radio 2000		✓			
Any Radio			✓		
Any TV				✓	
Any					✓
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	-0.96	-0.98	-0.97	-0.98	-0.98
Adj R²	0.51	0.49	0.51	0.34	0.35
Observations	21700	20160	18284	18116	17780

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on violence using specification 1, sequentially excluding municipalities hosting alternative active antennas. See Appendix B.1 for details on these media outlets. The unit of observation is the municipality-year. The dependent variable is the logarithm of the number of conflict events at the municipality level, transformed so that the extensive margin corresponds to a 100% increase, following Chen and Roth (2023). Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 excludes municipalities hosting a Radio 2000 transmitter. Column 3 excludes municipalities hosting any SABC radio outlets that broadcast TRC-related content. Column 4 excludes municipalities hosting major television stations. Column 5 excludes municipalities hosting any of the radio or television antennas listed above. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.9: TRC Media and National Identity Omitting Suburbs with Antennas

Dependent Variable:	National Identity				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
TRC Media	0.024***	0.022***	0.021**	0.022***	0.021**
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Exclude Suburb with Tx					
Radio 2000		✓			
Any Radio			✓		
Any Tv				✓	
Any					✓
Geographic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Socio-Econ	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Individual	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Muni × Wave FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70
Adj R^2	0.12	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.12
Observations	10983	10461	9904	9772	9670

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on national identity using specification 2, sequentially excluding municipalities hosting alternative active antennas. See Appendix B.1 for details on these media outlets. The unit of observation is the individual. TRC media exposure is standardized to have mean zero and standard deviation one. The dependent variable is a national-identity index constructed by pooling Afrobarometer waves 1-6 and extracting the first principal component of two survey items: (i) whether respondents identify primarily as South African rather than with an ethnic group, and (ii) whether they support building a unified South African nation across groups. Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 excludes municipalities hosting a Radio 2000 transmitter. Column 3 excludes municipalities hosting any SABC radio outlets that broadcast TRC-related content. Column 4 excludes municipalities hosting major television stations. Column 5 excludes municipalities hosting any of the radio or television antennas listed above. All specifications include the same set of controls: baseline suburb-level characteristics (free-space signal strength for each media outlet; the inverse hyperbolic sine of population, the White population share, and the employment share, all as of 1996; area, altitude, ruggedness, and their squared terms); geographic characteristics (temperature, rainfall, agricultural suitability, distance to the coast and inland water, and squared terms); ethnic composition as of 1996 (shares of English, Afrikaans, and Zulu speakers and the Black population share); socioeconomic characteristics as of 1996 (income score, urbanization, marital status, religious affiliation, and age composition); and all individual-level controls (gender, race, age, age squared, rural residency, educational attainment, and ethnic origin). All regressions include municipality-by-wave fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.10: TRC Media and Racial Segregation Omitting Municipalities with Antennas

Dependent Variable:	Racial Segregation				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
TRC Media × Post	0.030***	0.027***	0.025***	0.026***	0.026***
	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Exclude Muni with Tx					
Radio 2000		✓			
Any Radio			✓		
Any TV				✓	
Any					✓
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Province × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.68	0.68	0.70	0.70	0.70
Adj R^2	0.78	0.78	0.77	0.77	0.77
Observations	2110	1946	1746	1728	1692

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on racial residential segregation using specification 3, sequentially excluding municipalities hosting alternative active antennas. See Appendix B.1 for details on these media outlets. The unit of observation is the 1996 municipality-year. The dependent variable is a dissimilarity index. Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 excludes municipalities hosting a Radio 2000 transmitter. Column 3 excludes municipalities hosting any SABC radio outlets that broadcast TRC-related content. Column 4 excludes municipalities hosting major television stations. Column 5 excludes municipalities hosting any of the radio or television antennas listed above. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, the log number of suburbs used to compute the segregation index, interactions between year fixed effects and demographics as of 1996 (shares of English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa and the Black population share), and province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.11: TRC Media and Ethnic Segregation Omitting Municipalities with Antennas

Dependent Variable:	Ethnic Segregation				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
TRC Media × Post	−0.018	−0.016	−0.014	−0.013	−0.014
	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.014)
Exclude Muni with Tx					
Radio 2000		✓			
Any Radio			✓		
Any TV				✓	
Any					✓
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Province × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.45	0.44	0.43	0.43	0.43
Adj R²	0.56	0.54	0.55	0.55	0.54
Observations	2084	1921	1721	1703	1667

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on ethnic residential segregation using specification 3, sequentially excluding municipalities hosting alternative active antennas. See Appendix B.1 for details on these media outlets. The unit of observation is the 1996 municipality-year. The dependent variable is a dissimilarity index. Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 excludes municipalities hosting a Radio 2000 transmitter. Column 3 excludes municipalities hosting any SABC radio outlets that broadcast TRC-related content. Column 4 excludes municipalities hosting major television stations. Column 5 excludes municipalities hosting any of the radio or television antennas listed above. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, the log number of suburbs used to compute the segregation index, interactions between year fixed effects and demographics as of 1996 (shares of English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa and the Black population share), and province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.12: TRC Media and Interethnic Marriage Omitting Municipalities with Antennas

Dependent Variable:	Interethnic Marriage · 100				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
TRC Media × Post	0.574***	0.821***	0.880***	0.817***	0.840***
	(0.153)	(0.196)	(0.285)	(0.259)	(0.315)
Exclude Muni with Tx					
Radio 2000		✓			
Any Radio			✓		
Any Tv				✓	
Any					✓
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Province × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	7.62	7.07	7.84	8.13	8.19
Adj R^2	0.11	0.11	0.10	0.10	0.10
Observations	157779	72614	59855	56416	54995

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on interethnic marriage using specification 3, sequentially excluding municipalities hosting alternative active antennas. See Appendix B.1 for details on these media outlets. The unit of observation is the individual, and TRC media exposure is measured at the municipality level. The dependent variable is a binary indicator equal to 100 if the individual's spouse belongs to a different racial group and zero otherwise. Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 excludes municipalities hosting a Radio 2000 transmitter. Column 3 excludes municipalities hosting any SABC radio outlets that broadcast TRC-related content. Column 4 excludes municipalities hosting major television stations. Column 5 excludes municipalities hosting any of the radio or television antennas listed above. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, as well as controls for race, age, and age squared; ethnicity-by-municipality and ethnicity-by-year fixed effects; interactions between year fixed effects and the 1996 municipality-level shares of Black, English, Afrikaans, and Zulu; and province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.13: TRC Media and Interracial Marriage Omitting Municipalities with Antennas

Dependent Variable:	Interracial Marriage · 100				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
TRC Media × Post	−0.243**	−0.282**	−0.277*	−0.390**	−0.389**
	(0.106)	(0.133)	(0.163)	(0.160)	(0.186)
Exclude Muni with Tx					
Radio 2000		✓			
Any Radio			✓		
Any Tv				✓	
Any					✓
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Province × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	1.55	1.60	1.40	1.32	1.30
Adj R^2	0.06	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.08
Observations	157779	72614	59855	56416	54995

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on interracial marriage using specification 3, sequentially excluding municipalities hosting alternative active antennas. See Appendix B.1 for details on these media outlets. The unit of observation is the individual, and TRC media exposure is measured at the municipality level. The dependent variable is a binary indicator equal to 100 if the individual's spouse belongs to a different racial group and zero otherwise. Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 excludes municipalities hosting a Radio 2000 transmitter. Column 3 excludes municipalities hosting any SABC radio outlets that broadcast TRC-related content. Column 4 excludes municipalities hosting major television stations. Column 5 excludes municipalities hosting any of the radio or television antennas listed above. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, as well as controls for race, age, and age squared; ethnicity-by-municipality and ethnicity-by-year fixed effects; interactions between year fixed effects and the 1996 municipality-level shares of Black, English, Afrikaans, and Zulu; and province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.14: TRC Media Exposure and Violence Controlling for Distances

Dependent Variable:	Log Violent Events				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
TRC Media × Post	-0.020^{***}	-0.016^{***}	-0.016^{***}	-0.016^{***}	-0.015^{***}
	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Dist to Johannesburg		✓			✓
Dist to Cape Town			✓		✓
Dist to Prov Capital				✓	✓
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	-0.96	-0.96	-0.96	-0.96	-0.96
Adj R^2	0.51	0.52	0.51	0.53	0.53
Observations	21700	21700	21700	20384	20384

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on violence using specification 1, controlling for proximity to major urban centers. The unit of observation is the 1996 municipality-year. The dependent variable is the logarithm of the number of conflict events at the municipality level, transformed so that the extensive margin corresponds to a 100% increase (Chen and Roth 2023). Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 adds an interaction between post-TRC exposure and distance to Johannesburg. Column 3 additionally controls for distance to Cape Town interacted with the post period. Column 4 includes distance to the relevant provincial capital interacted with the post period. Column 5 further includes all above distances interacted with the post period. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.15: TRC Media Exposure and National Identity Controlling for Distances

Dependent Variable:	National Identity				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
TRC Media	0.024***	0.024***	0.024***	0.026***	0.026***
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Dist to Johannesburg		✓			✓
Dist to Cape Town			✓		✓
Dist to Prov Capital				✓	✓
Geographic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Socio-Econ	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Individual	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Muni × Wave FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70
Adj R^2	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.13	0.12
Observations	10983	10983	10983	10983	10983

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on national identity using specification 2, controlling for proximity to major urban centers. The independent variable is standardized to have mean zero and standard deviation one. The unit of observation is the individual. The dependent variable is a national-identity index constructed by pooling Afrobarometer waves 1-6 and extracting the first principal component of two survey items: (i) whether respondents identify primarily as South African rather than with an ethnic group, and (ii) whether they support building a unified South African nation across groups. Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 adds an interaction between post-TRC exposure and distance to Johannesburg. Column 3 additionally includes distance to Cape Town interacted with the post period. Column 4 adds distance to the relevant provincial capital interacted with the post period. Column 5 further includes all above distances interacted with the post period. All specifications include the same set of controls: baseline suburb-level characteristics (free-space signal strength for each media outlet; the inverse hyperbolic sine of population, the White population share, and the employment share, all as of 1996; area, altitude, ruggedness, and their squared terms); geographic characteristics (temperature, rainfall, agricultural suitability, distance to the coast and inland water, and squared terms); ethnic composition as of 1996 (shares of English, Afrikaans, and Zulu speakers and the Black population share); socioeconomic characteristics as of 1996 (income score, urbanization, marital status, religious affiliation, and age composition); and all individual-level controls (gender, race, age, age squared, rural residency, educational attainment, and ethnic origin). All regressions include municipality-by-wave fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.16: TRC Media Exposure and Racial Segregation Controlling for Distances

Dependent Variable:	Racial Segregation				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
TRC Media × Post	0.030***	0.030***	0.030***	0.032***	0.033***
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Dist to Johannesburg		✓			✓
Dist to Cape Town			✓		✓
Dist to Prov Capital				✓	✓
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Province × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.67	0.67
Adj R^2	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.77	0.78
Observations	2110	2110	2110	1969	1969

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on racial residential segregation using specification 3, controlling for proximity to major urban centers. The unit of observation is the 1996 municipality-year. The dependent variable is a dissimilarity index measuring racial segregation. Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 adds an interaction between post-TRC exposure and distance to Johannesburg. Column 3 additionally includes distance to Cape Town interacted with the post period. Column 4 adds distance to the relevant provincial capital interacted with the post period. Column 5 further includes all above distances interacted with the post period. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, the log number of suburbs used to compute the segregation index, interactions between year fixed effects and demographics as of 1996 (shares of English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa and the Black population share), and province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.17: TRC Media Exposure and Ethnic Segregation Controlling for Distances

Dependent Variable:	Ethnic Segregation				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
TRC Media × Post	−0.018	−0.018	−0.018	−0.019	−0.018
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Dist to Johannesburg		✓			✓
Dist to Cape Town			✓		✓
Dist to Prov Capital				✓	✓
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Province × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.44
Adj R^2	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.54	0.54
Observations	2084	2084	2084	1943	1943

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on ethnic residential segregation using specification 3, controlling for proximity to major urban centers. The unit of observation is the 1996 municipality-year. The dependent variable is a dissimilarity index measuring ethnic segregation. Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 adds an interaction between post-TRC exposure and distance to Johannesburg. Column 3 additionally includes distance to Cape Town interacted with the post period. Column 4 adds distance to the relevant provincial capital interacted with the post period. Column 5 further includes all above distances interacted with the post period. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, the log number of suburbs used to compute the segregation index, interactions between year fixed effects and demographics as of 1996 (shares of English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa and the Black population share), and province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.18: TRC Media Exposure and Interracial Marriages Controlling for Distances

Dependent Variable:	Interracial Marriage · 100				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
TRC Media × Post	−0.243**	−0.243**	−0.238**	−0.299***	−0.274**
	(0.106)	(0.105)	(0.100)	(0.110)	(0.109)
Dist to Johannesburg		✓			✓
Dist to Cape Town			✓		✓
Dist to Prov Capital				✓	✓
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Province × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	1.55	1.55	1.55	1.55	1.55
Adj R^2	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
Observations	157779	157779	157779	157779	157779

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on interracial marriage using specification 3, controlling for proximity to major urban centers. The unit of observation is the individual, and TRC media exposure is measured at the municipality level. The dependent variable is a binary indicator equal to 100 if the individual's spouse belongs to a different racial group and zero otherwise. Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 adds an interaction between post-TRC exposure and distance to Johannesburg. Column 3 additionally includes distance to Cape Town interacted with the post period. Column 4 adds distance to the relevant provincial capital interacted with the post period. Column 5 further includes all above distances interacted with the post period. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, as well as controls for race, age, and age squared; ethnicity-by-municipality and ethnicity-by-year fixed effects; interactions between year fixed effects and the 1996 municipality-level shares of Black, English, Afrikaans, and Zulu; and province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.19: TRC Media Exposure and Interethnic Marriages Controlling for Distances

Dependent Variable:	Interethnic Marriage · 100				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
TRC Media × Post	0.574***	0.565***	0.578***	0.613***	0.654***
	(0.153)	(0.154)	(0.150)	(0.163)	(0.160)
Dist to Johannesburg		✓			✓
Dist to Cape Town			✓		✓
Dist to Prov Capital				✓	✓
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Province × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	7.62	7.62	7.62	7.62	7.62
Adj R^2	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11
Observations	157779	157779	157779	157779	157779

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on interethnic marriage using specification 3, controlling for proximity to major urban centers. The unit of observation is the individual, and TRC media exposure is measured at the municipality level. The dependent variable is a binary indicator equal to 100 if the individual's spouse belongs to a different ethnic group and zero otherwise. Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2 adds an interaction between post-TRC exposure and distance to Johannesburg. Column 3 additionally includes distance to Cape Town interacted with the post period. Column 4 adds distance to the relevant provincial capital interacted with the post period. Column 5 further includes all above distances interacted with the post period. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, as well as controls for race, age, and age squared; ethnicity-by-municipality and ethnicity-by-year fixed effects; interactions between year fixed effects and the 1996 municipality-level shares of Black, English, Afrikaans, and Zulu; and province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.20: TRC Media Exposure and Different Transformations of Violence

Dependent Variable:	Violent Events			
	Baseline (1)	Per Capita (2)	IHS (3)	Probability (4)
TRC Media × Post	−0.020***	−0.047***	−0.017***	−0.010***
	(0.005)	(0.012)	(0.004)	(0.003)
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	-0.96	-0.90	0.03	0.02
Adj R^2	0.51	0.42	0.52	0.33
Observations	21700	21700	21700	21700

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on alternative transformations of violent events using specification 1. The unit of observation is the 1996 municipality-year. Column 1 reports the baseline specification, where the dependent variable is the logarithm of the number of violent events, transformed so that the extensive margin corresponds to a 100% increase (Chen and Roth 2023). Column 2 uses the logarithm of the per capita number of violent events. Column 3 uses the inverse hyperbolic sine (IHS) transformation of the total number of violent events. Column 4 uses a binary indicator equal to one if any violent event occurred in a municipality-year. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.21: TRC Media Exposure and Violence – Additional Controls

Dependent Variable:	Log Violent Events				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
TRC Media × Post	−0.020***	−0.020***	−0.020***	−0.020***	−0.010**
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.004)
Population × Year FE		✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. White × Year FE			✓	✓	✓
Sh. Employed × Year FE				✓	✓
Province × Year FE					✓
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	-0.96	-0.96	-0.96	-0.96	-0.96
Adj R^2	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.52	0.53
Observations	21700	21700	21700	21700	21700

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on violence using specification 1, adding progressively richer controls. The unit of observation is the 1996 municipality-year. The dependent variable is the logarithm of the number of violent events at the municipality level, transformed so that the extensive margin corresponds to a 100% increase (Chen and Roth 2023). Column 1 reports the baseline specification. Column 2-4 sequentially add interactions between year fixed effects and 1996 population, 1996 White population share, and 1996 employment share, Column 5 includes province-by-year fixed effects. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.22: TRC Media Exposure and Violence – ACLED

	Type of Violence			
Dependent Variable:	Total (1)	Violent (2)	Mobs (3)	Deaths (4)
TRC Media	-0.005^{***}	-0.001^{**}	-0.003^{***}	-0.001^{**}
	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.000)
Basic	✓	✓	✓	✓
Geographic	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnic	✓	✓	✓	✓
Socio-Econ	✓	✓	✓	✓
Muni × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	-0.98	-1.00	-0.99	-1.00
Adj R^2	0.09	0.04	0.07	0.05
Observations	289016	289016	289016	289016

Note: This table presents the estimated effects of TRC media exposure on violence using data from ACLED. The unit of observation is the 1996 suburb-year; all the years are post-TRC (1997-2017). Column 1 reports results for the total number of conflict events. Column 2 focuses on violent events, Column 3 on organized violence and mob violence, and Column 4 on the total number of casualties. All dependent variables are log-transformed, with the transformation weighted so that the extensive margin corresponds to a 100% increase (Chen and Roth 2023). All specifications control for suburb-level characteristics measured in 1996. Basic controls include the free-space signal, the inverse hyperbolic sine of population, the share of the White population, the share of employed individuals, area, altitude, ruggedness, and their squared terms. Geographic controls include average annual temperature, average annual rainfall, average agricultural suitability, distance to the coast, distance to inland water, and their squared terms. Ethnic controls include the shares of English, Afrikaans, and Zulu speakers, as well as the share of the Black population. Socioeconomic controls include the average income score, the share of the urban population, the share of married individuals, the share of Christians, and the share of the population aged over 60. All regressions include municipality-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.23: The Dynamics of the Impact of TRC Media Exposure on National Identity

Dependent Variable:	National identity		Feel SA		United SA	
Time Period	2000s	2010s	2000s	2010s	2000s	2010s
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
TRC Media × Black	0.050***	0.006	0.055*	0.008	0.035**	0.005
	(0.017)	(0.010)	(0.029)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.014)
TRC Media × White	0.010	−0.030	−0.009	−0.047	0.062	−0.013
	(0.059)	(0.032)	(0.069)	(0.093)	(0.065)	(0.074)
Geographic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Socio-Econ	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ind Demo	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ind Ethnic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Muni × Wave × Race FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.73	0.68	0.63	0.54	0.83	0.83
Adj R²	0.09	0.07	0.11	0.10	0.07	0.05
Observations	4340	6520	4340	6520	6408	6520

Note: This table presents the estimated effects of TRC media exposure on national identity using specification 2, illustrating both the dynamic evolution of the effects over time and their robustness to the use of the original survey items. The sample is split between early and late Afrobarometer waves: odd-numbered columns report estimates using waves 1-3, while even-numbered columns use waves 4-6. Columns 1 and 2 report results for the baseline national-identity index, constructed by combining two survey items: (i) whether respondents identify primarily as South African rather than with an ethnic group, and (ii) whether they support building one unified South African nation across groups. Columns 3 and 4 use only item (i), while Columns 5 and 6 use only item (ii). The independent variable is standardized to have mean zero and standard deviation one. The unit of observation is the individual. Race-specific effects are based on interactions between race indicators and TRC media exposure and are reported as marginal effects from fully interacted models. All specifications include the same set of controls: baseline suburb-level characteristics (free-space signal strength for each media outlet; the inverse hyperbolic sine of population, the White population share, and the employment share, all as of 1996; area, altitude, ruggedness, and their squared terms); geographic characteristics (temperature, rainfall, agricultural suitability, distance to the coast and inland water, and squared terms); ethnic composition as of 1996 (shares of English, Afrikaans, and Zulu speakers and the Black population share); socioeconomic characteristics as of 1996 (income score, urbanization, marital status, religious affiliation, and age composition); and all individual-level controls (gender, race, age, age squared, rural residency, educational attainment, and ethnic origin). All regressions include municipality-by-wave municipality-by-race and race-by-wave fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.24: TRC Media Exposure and Alternative Transformations of National Identity

Dependent Variable:	Baseline National Identity Index				National Identity Index w/ Child SA			
Transformation:	Baseline Index (1)	with 1st wave (2)	PCA (3)	PCA with 1st wave (4)	Baseline Index (5)	with 1st wave (6)	PCA (7)	PCA with 1st wave (8)
TRC Media	0.074***	0.075***	0.072***	0.076***	0.076***	0.073***	0.065**	0.063**
	(0.024)	(0.025)	(0.023)	(0.025)	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.029)	(0.029)
Geographic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Socio-Econ	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Individual	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Muni × Wave FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.70	0.68	0.01	0.01	0.76	0.74	0.01	0.01
Adj R^2	0.12	0.14	0.12	0.13	0.12	0.13	0.11	0.11
Observations	10983	13049	10983	13049	10983	13049	10983	13049

Note: This table presents estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on national identity using specification 2, assessing robustness to alternative constructions of the national-identity index. Both dependent and independent variables are standardized to have mean zero and standard deviation one. The unit of observation is the individual. Column 1 reports the baseline specification, in which the dependent variable is constructed by pooling Afrobarometer waves 1â6 and averaging two survey items: (i) whether respondents identify primarily as South African rather than with an ethnic group, and (ii) whether they support building one unified South African nation across groups. Column 2 adds a proxy for item (i) available in the first Afrobarometer wave. Column 3 replaces the baseline index with its first principal component, while Column 4 reports results using the principal component augmented with the proxy of item (i). Columns 5-8 replicate Columns 1-4 while additionally incorporating a third item capturing whether respondents want their children to identify as South African. All specifications include the same set of controls: baseline suburb-level characteristics (free-space signal strength for each media outlet; the inverse hyperbolic sine of population, the White population share, and the employment share, all as of 1996; area, altitude, ruggedness, and their squared terms); geographic characteristics (temperature, rainfall, agricultural suitability, distance to the coast and inland water, and squared terms); ethnic composition as of 1996 (shares of English, Afrikaans, and Zulu speakers and the Black population share); socioeconomic characteristics as of 1996 (income score, urbanization, marital status, religious affiliation, and age composition); and all individual-level controls (gender, race, age, age squared, rural residency, educational attainment, and ethnic origin). All regressions include municipality-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.25: TRC Media Exposure and Alternative Measures of Residential Segregation

	Segregation					
	Racial			Ethnic		
Dependent Variable:	D	G	H	D	G	H
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
TRC Media × Post	0.029***	0.029***	0.034***	−0.018	−0.018	−0.009
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.009)
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Province × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.68	0.76	0.44	0.45	0.54	0.22
Adj R^2	0.77	0.76	0.77	0.56	0.60	0.54
Observations	2110	2110	2110	2084	2084	2084

Note: This table presents estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on alternative measures of residential sorting using specification 3. The unit of observation is the 1996 municipality-year. Columns 1 and 4 use the dissimilarity index (D) as the dependent variable, corresponding to the baseline results reported in Table 3. Columns 2 and 5 use the Gini index (G), while Columns 3 and 6 use the Theil Information Index (H). All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, the log number of suburbs used to compute the segregation index, interactions between year fixed effects and demographics as of 1996 (shares of English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa and the Black population share), and province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.26: The Effect of TRC Media Exposure on Residential Sorting

Dependent Variable:	Share					
	White	Black	White	Black	Xhosa	Zulu
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
TRC Media × Post	0.002	−0.001	−0.002**	−0.021**	−0.000	0.001
	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.001)	(0.010)	(0.001)	(0.001)
... × % White 1996			0.055***			
			(0.017)			
... × % Black 1996				0.025**		
				(0.011)		
... × % Xhosa 1996					−0.002	
					(0.005)	
... × % Zulu 1996						−0.015***
						(0.006)
Muni FE	✓	✓				
Suburb FE			✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Province × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.13	0.62	0.11	0.81	0.25	0.22
Adj R^2	0.88	0.97	0.92	0.94	0.98	0.99
Observations	2202	2202	20178	20178	20178	20178

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on demographic composition using specification 3. Columns 1 and 2 replicate the most saturated specification from Table 3, using the municipality-level shares of White and Black residents as outcomes. The unit of observation in these columns is the 1996 municipality-year. Columns 3-6 use the same specification but shift the unit of observation to the 1996 suburb-year and restrict the sample to the years 1996 and 2011. Column 3 reports results for the share of White residents, Column 4 for the share of Black residents, Column 5 for the share of Xhosa residents, and Column 6 for the share of Zulu residents. The table reports coefficients on the interaction between TRC media exposure and a post-TRC period indicator, as well as its interaction with the initial (1996) share of White, Black, Xhosa, and Zulu residents at the suburb level. Columns 1 and 2 include municipality fixed effects, while Columns 3-6 include suburb fixed effects. All specifications include year fixed effects, interactions between year fixed effects and 1996 demographic shares (shares of English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa and the Black population share), and province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.27: The Effect of TRC Media Exposure on Interethnic Marriage by Age Cohort

Dependent Variable:	Intermarriage · 100							
	Interracial				Interethnic			
Cohort:	≤ 30	≤ 35	≤ 40	≤ 45	≤ 30	≤ 35	≤ 40	≤ 45
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
TRC Media × Post	−0.243**	−0.153**	−0.129**	−0.111**	0.574***	0.398***	0.333***	0.308***
	(0.106)	(0.075)	(0.065)	(0.055)	(0.153)	(0.128)	(0.110)	(0.102)
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Province × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	1.55	1.39	1.30	1.23	7.62	7.03	6.49	6.11
Adj R^2	0.06	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11
Observations	157779	321350	501573	663976	157779	321350	501573	663976

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on intermarriage using specification 3, varying the age threshold used to restrict the sample. The unit of observation is the individual, and TRC media exposure is measured at the municipality level. The dependent variable is a binary indicator equal to 100 if the individual's spouse belongs to a different racial group (Columns 1-4) or a different ethnic group (Columns 5-8), and zero otherwise. Columns 1 and 5 report the baseline results. Columns 2 and 6 restrict the sample to individuals younger than 35, Columns 3 and 7 to those younger than 40, and Columns 4 and 8 to those younger than 45. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, as well as controls for race, age, and age squared; ethnicity-by-municipality and ethnicity-by-year fixed effects; interactions between year fixed effects and the 1996 municipality-level shares of Black, English, Afrikaans, and Zulu; and province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.28: The Effect of TRC Media Exposure on Intermarriage – Spouses' Controls

Dependent Variable:	Intermarriage · 100							
	Interracial				Interethnic			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
TRC Media × Post	−0.125	−0.165**	−0.131*	−0.104	0.554**	0.783***	0.567**	0.280**
	(0.105)	(0.078)	(0.076)	(0.071)	(0.238)	(0.265)	(0.221)	(0.135)
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Muni FE		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Year FE		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE			✓	✓			✓	✓
Province × Year FE				✓				✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	1.41	1.41	1.41	1.41	7.36	7.30	7.30	7.30
Adj R^2	0.05	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.04	0.10	0.10	0.10
Observations	291452	290992	290992	290992	291452	290992	290992	290992

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on intermarriage using specification 3. The unit of observation is the couple; the sample is restricted to couples with wives younger than 30. TRC media exposure is measured at the municipality level. The dependent variable is a binary indicator equal to 100 for interracial couples (Columns 1-4) or interethnic couples (Columns 5-8), and zero otherwise. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, as well as controls for the wife race, age, and age squared; ethnicity-by-municipality and ethnicity-by-year fixed effects; interactions between year fixed effects and the 1996 municipality-level shares of Black, English, Afrikaans, and Zulu; and province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.29: The Effect of TRC Media Exposure on Interethnic Marriage by Race

Dependent Variable:	Interethnic Marriage · 100							
	Black				White			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
TRC Media × Post	0.798***	1.060***	0.851***	0.506**	0.362	0.356	0.103	0.738**
	(0.236)	(0.288)	(0.294)	(0.202)	(0.294)	(0.316)	(0.321)	(0.320)
Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Muni FE		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Ethnicity × Year FE		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Sh. Ethnic × Year FE			✓	✓			✓	✓
Province × Year FE				✓				✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	9.53	9.40	9.40	9.40	4.97	4.82	4.82	4.82
Adj R^2	0.04	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.02	0.05	0.05	0.05
Observations	107339	106933	106933	106933	29450	29288	29288	29288

Note: This table reports estimates of the effect of TRC media exposure on interethnic marriage using specification 3, by race. The unit of observation is the individual, and the sample is restricted to individuals younger than 30. TRC media exposure is measured at the municipality level. The dependent variable is a binary indicator equal to 100 if the individual's spouse belongs to a different ethnic group, and zero otherwise. Columns 1-4 report results for Black individuals, while Columns 5-8 report results for White individuals. All specifications include municipality and year fixed effects, as well as controls for race, gender, age, and age squared. Columns 2 and 5 additionally include ethnicity-by-municipality and ethnicity-by-year fixed effects. Columns 3 and 6 further control for interactions between year fixed effects and the municipality-level shares of Black, English, Afrikaans, and Zulu. Columns 4 and 8 include province-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the district level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.30: Robustness to Alternative Inference Procedures

Dependent Variable:	Estimate (1)	Baseline (2)	HAK 75 (3)	HAK 150 (4)
1. Violence any	−0.020	0.005***	0.008**	0.007***
2. National identity	0.024	0.008***	0.009***	0.007***
3. Racial sorting	0.030	0.008***	0.006***	0.007***
4. Ethnic sorting	−0.018	0.014	0.011*	0.012
5. Interracial marriage	−0.260	0.103**	0.119**	0.153*
6. Interethnic marriage	0.821	0.206***	0.202***	0.213***

Note: This table reports robustness to of our main results to alternative inference procedures. Each row reports results from a separate regression and displays the point estimate and confidence interval from the baseline specification in Columns 1 and 2. Columns 3 and 4 report standard errors that allow for arbitrary spatial autocorrelation across units using bandwidths of 75 kilometers and 150 kilometers, respectively (Conley 1999). Row 1 replicates results on violence reported on Column 1 of Table 1. Row 2 replicates results on national identity reported in Column 5 of Table 2. Rows 3 and 4 replicate the residential sorting results presented in columns 4 and 8 of Table 3. Rows 5 and 6 replicate the intermarriage results presented in columns 4 and 8 of Table 4. Statistical significance is denoted by* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.31: NT-SDF Firm-Level Data – Descriptive Statistics

	Low TRC			High TRC		
	N. Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	N. Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Firm Variables						
Sales (in M Rands)	180,651	33.87	665.7	172,873	45.39	795.0
Number of Employees	181,039	43.29	926.1	173,214	54.25	779.9
Share of women among employees	181,039	0.411	0.316	173,214	0.404	0.312
Average wage (1000s Rands)	180,195	119,504	163,202	172,598	130,131	276,800
Agriculture	181,039	0.0234	0.151	173,214	0.0205	0.142
Manufacturing	181,039	0.117	0.322	173,214	0.115	0.319
Construction	181,039	0.104	0.306	173,214	0.101	0.302
Retail	181,039	0.0951	0.293	173,214	0.0907	0.287
Retail Motortrade	181,039	0.132	0.338	173,214	0.132	0.338
Wholetrade	181,039	0.0592	0.236	173,214	0.0548	0.228
IT	181,039	0.0384	0.192	173,214	0.0446	0.207
Transport/Communication	181,039	0.0788	0.269	173,214	0.0886	0.284
Finance/Business	181,039	0.237	0.425	173,214	0.235	0.424
Socio-Economic Variables						
IHS Population	181,039	9.948	1.236	173,214	10.02	1.740
Share Black	181,039	0.300	0.271	173,214	0.345	0.317
Share White	181,039	0.570	0.310	173,214	0.528	0.337
Share Male	181,039	0.493	0.0329	173,214	0.498	0.0622
Share Christians	181,039	0.727	0.125	173,214	0.718	0.143
Share Zulu Speaker	181,039	0.0891	0.188	173,214	0.109	0.166
Share English Speaker	181,039	0.335	0.228	173,214	0.320	0.228
Share Afrikaaner Speaker	181,039	0.351	0.248	173,214	0.325	0.286
Share Urban	181,039	0.944	0.210	173,214	0.945	0.202
Share SA Citizen	181,039	0.967	0.0286	173,214	0.964	0.0343
Share Aged 60+	181,039	0.0954	0.0521	173,214	0.106	0.0644
Share Married	181,039	0.395	0.0954	173,214	0.383	0.102
Unemployment Rate	181,039	0.115	0.133	173,214	0.129	0.132
Share Manufacturing	181,039	0.116	0.0563	173,214	0.112	0.0763

Note: This table reports descriptive statistics for firms in the NT-SDF employer-employee matched panel tax dataset. The first three columns correspond to firms in the lowest quartile of the residualized TRC media exposure, while the last three columns correspond to firms in the highest quartile.

B Data Appendix

In this section, we provide further details on data construction.

B.1 Media Coverage

We compute signal coverage using the Irregular Terrain Model (ITM) for all media outlets that broadcast TRC proceedings. This includes our main media outlet, *Radio 2000*, as well as the weekly TRC coverage provided by other stations: Lesedi (Sesotho), Ukhozi (isiZulu), Umhlobo Wenene (isiXhosa), Thobela (Sepedi), Ikwekwezi (Ndebele), Motsweding (Setswana), Munghana Lonene (Xitsonga), Ligwalagwala (SiSwati), and Radio Sonder Grense (Afrikaans). We also include television coverage from SABC 1, 2, and 3, which aired regular TRC segments (Cole 2010, p. 198).

To generate these coverage, we rely on CloudRF, a software platform for radio propagation modeling. CloudRF allows us to implement the ITM model using two sets of inputs. The first consists of the technical characteristics of each antenna—coordinates, height, power, and broadcast frequency—sourced from the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa; when station-specific information was missing, we used national averages. The second set captures the region's topography, including hills and mountainous terrain that shape signal strength (Crabtree and Kern 2018). Parameters were tuned to the South African context following guidance from CloudRF engineers. Figure B.21 provides an example of the radio coverage reach from a transmitter located in Kimberly. For each antenna, we generated high-resolution coverage data at 90-meter resolution, and we used GIS software to aggregate the signal coverage from the raster data to suburbs by calculating the mean coverage.

Figure B.21: Example radio coverage output

(a) Gray scale raster output

(b) Raster to vector output
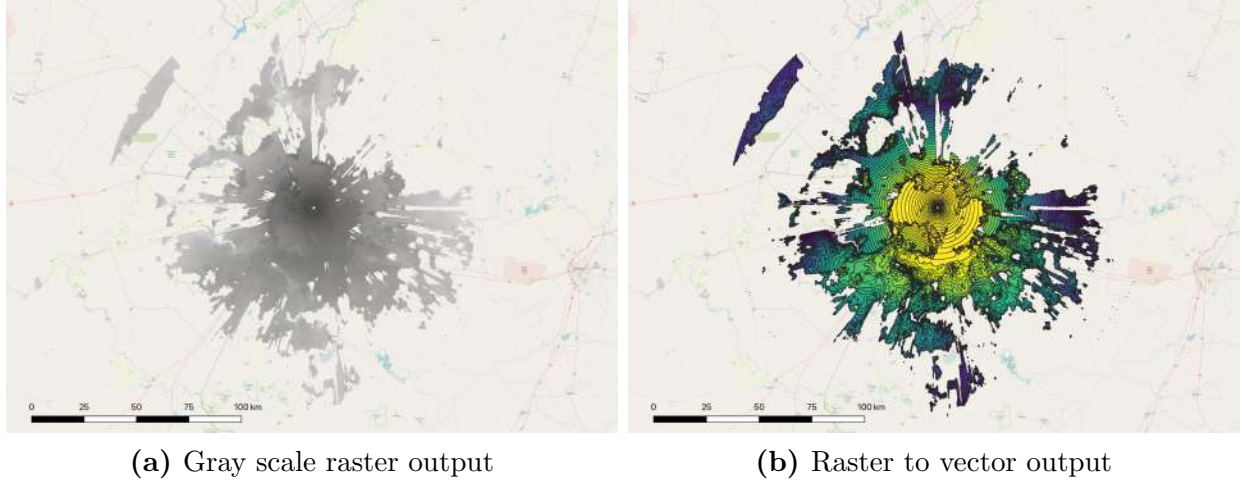
Notes: This figure illustrates an example of the ITM radio coverage output for an antenna located in Kimberly. Panel A displays the original raster output at a 90-meter resolution, capturing the fine-grained signal coverage distribution. Panel B presents the vectorized version of the raster, where differences in coverage after adjusting for topographic characteristics are more clearly observed. Areas shaded in dark purple represent lower coverage, while yellow tones indicate regions with higher signal reception.

B.2   Afrobarometer

National Identity   To measure national identity, we construct an index by taking the mean of two questions:

(i) Feeling South African, which is derived from the following questions:

- For waves 2 to 6: 'Let us suppose that you had to choose between being a South African and being a [identity group]. Which of these two groups do you feel most strongly attached to?' (1 = South African; 0 = otherwise).

- For wave 1: We conduct a robustness check to include wave 1 in our analysis. We approximate the Feeling South African measure by harmonizing a related question: 'You feel much stronger ties to [identity group] than to other South Africans?' (1 = strongly disagree or disagree; 0 = otherwise).

(ii) Wanting a united society, which is derived from the following question:

- For waves 1 to 6: 'It is desirable to create one united South African nation out of all the different groups who live in this country.' (1 = strongly agree or agree; 0 = otherwise).

Attitudes towards the TRC and reconciliation. For questions related to the TRC, we rely on the first wave of the Afrobarometer, the only wave that contains TRC-specific questions.

- Important for Nation Building: Please tell me whether you disagree, neither disagree nor agree, or agree with these statements, 'TRC was important for building a united South African nation'. (1= strongly agree or agree; 0= otherwise).

- Symbolic reconciliation: We perform a principal component analysis on four questions. Please tell me whether you disagree, neither disagree nor agree, or agree with these statements (1= strongly agree or agree; 0= otherwise)
  - Reconciliation requires that South Africans understand one another better
  - National Reconciliation requires that people forgive one another
  - National Reconciliation requires forgetting the past
  - National Reconciliation requires the healing of memories

- Material compensation: We perform a principal component analysis on two questions.
  - 'National reconciliation requires material compensation for victims of apartheid' (1= strongly agree or agree; 0= otherwise).
  - 'It is my responsibility as a citizen to contribute to the process of reconciliation' (1= strongly agree or agree; 0= otherwise).

- Amnesty: 'National reconciliation requires amnesty as provided by the TRC' (1= strongly agree or agree; 0= otherwise).

B.3 Residential Mixing and Segregation

We measure residential segregation using data from the 1996, 2001, and 2011 population censuses. The analysis combines the 1996 and 2011 community profile datasets and the full individual-level 2001 census, harmonized to a consistent municipal geography.

B.3.1 Geographies and Spatial Harmonization.

1996 census. The 1996 community profiles report population counts at the *enumeration area* (EA) level, corresponding to roughly 83,000 small units nationwide. Each EA is linked to both a suburb and a 1996 municipal identifier (812 municipalities in total). We use these identifiers to compute population shares by racial group (Black, White, Coloured, Asian/Indian) at the placename level, and to aggregate segregation measures at the 1996 municipality level.

2001 census. The 2001 census' smallest geography is the *small area layer* (SAL), comprising roughly 54,000 units. Because SAL shapefiles are unavailable, we instead use the *small place* (SP) geography for spatial matching. We assign each 2001 SP to a 1996 municipality by locating its centroid within 1996 municipal boundaries.

2011 census. The 2011 community profiles are available at the *small area layer* (SAL) level, of which there are approximately 84,000 units. We spatially match each 2011 SAL to 1996 geographies (suburb and municipality) using a centroid-based spatial join. Each 2011 small area is therefore assigned to the 1996 municipality that contains its centroid.

These procedures yield a consistent panel of 812 municipalities, each subdivided into more than 50.000 subunits in every census wave, allowing direct comparison of segregation levels across 1996, 2001, and 2011.

B.3.2 Segregation Measures.

For each census year, we compute segregation indices at the 1996 municipal level using the smallest available geographic units (EA in 1996, SP in 2001, and SAL in 2011). We construct three standard measures:

1. the *dissimilarity index* (our baseline measure),

2. the *Gini index*, and

3. the *Theil information index*.

All results are robust to the choice of segregation measure. Because the precision of segregation estimates depends mechanically on the number of subunits used, we control in all regressions for the log number of subunits within each municipality-year.

B.3.3   Groups and Definitions.

For racial segregation, we consistently use the same four population categories available in all censuses: Black, Coloured, Asian/Indian, and White, excluding the residual "Other" category. For *interethnic segregation*, we use all reported mother-tongue groups (held constant across census years) excluding Sign Language and the English and Afrikaans groups, as our interest lies in linguistic segregation *within* the Black population.

B.3.4   Additional Outcomes.

To better interpret changes in segregation, we compute population composition indicators—namely the shares of Black, White, Xhosa, Zulu, Afrikaans-speaking, and English-speaking residents—at both the suburb and municipal levels. These variables allow us to relate movements in segregation indices to demographic and linguistic shifts within and across municipalities.

B.3.5   Descriptive Statistics.

Table B.32 reports average levels of racial and interethnic segregation, as well as the share of White residents, by census year. Racial segregation remains high but declines gradually between 1996 and 2011. Interethnic segregation within the Black population decreases more sharply, reflecting rising linguistic integration. The share of White residents also falls over time, consistent with differential migration and demographic growth patterns.

Table B.32: Segregation and White Population Share by Census Year

	Dissimilarity Index		
Census Year	Racial	Interethnic	Share White (%)
1996	0.719	0.494	15.16
2001	0.671	0.421	12.73
2011	0.660	0.430	11.65

Notes: Each observation corresponds to a 1996 municipality. Segregation indices are computed using the dissimilarity index based on the smallest available geographic units in each census (EAs in 1996, SPs in 2001, SALs in 2011). Interethnic segregation excludes English and Afrikaans speakers and captures linguistic segregation within the Black population. The last column reports the average share of White residents across municipalities (in percent).

B.4 Intermarriage

We construct a dataset at the couple level using the 10% public-use samples from the 1996, 2001, and 2011 South African censuses. Each census is originally at the individual level and identifies individuals within households. We use household composition and reported relationships to link individuals into couples, as detailed below.

Identifying Couples

2001 and 2011 Censuses. Both the 2001 and 2011 censuses include a variable reporting the line number of the respondent's spouse within the household. We keep individuals who are married (civil/religious), married traditionally, or living together as partners, and then identify as a couple those pairs of individuals who reciprocally report each other as spouses. Cases in which only one individual reports the other as a spouse are discarded.

1996 Census. Because the 1996 census does not report spouse line numbers, couples must be reconstructed from household composition. We proceed in three steps.

1. First, we restrict the sample to individuals who are married (civil/religious), married traditionally, or living together as partners, and we consider only opposite-sex individuals sharing the same marital status.

2. Second, within each household, we identify potential spouse pairs based on their reported relationship to the household head. We give priority to clear *Head/Spouse-of-head* pairs when both roles are present. When no such pair exists, we allow plausible non-head couples-for example, adult household members whose relationship categories make cohabitation credible (such as a direct relative living with a non-relative or in-law). To reduce spurious pairings, we keep only pairs with an age difference of 30 years or less.

3. Third, when a given individual has multiple plausible partners within the same household, we assign that individual to their *best partner*, defined as the candidate with (i) the most plausible relationship configuration (Head-Spouse pairs ranked highest) and (ii) the smallest age difference. We then retain only *mutual-best* matches–that is, pairs where each individual also selects the other as their best partner.

This procedure recovers both canonical Head-Spouse pairs (96% of all identified couples and 89% of all identified couples in our 18-30 reference sample) and plausible non-head couples while minimizing false matches. It yields internally consistent couple identifiers for the 1996 census comparable in structure to the explicit spouse-link variables available in 2001 and 2011.

Couple-Level Restrictions. Across all censuses, we retain only opposite-sex couples. We define an *interracial couple* as one in which the two spouses belong to different racial groups (Black, White, Coloured, or Indian/Asian). We define an *interethnic couple* as one in which the two spouses report different mother tongues, but only if they belong to the same racial

group. We set the interethnic indicator to zero for all interracial couples, ensuring that the two measures are orthogonal by construction. For example, an English-speaking White and an Afrikaans-speaking White form an interethnic couple, while an English-speaking White and an English-speaking Black form an interracial (but not interethnic) couple.

Geographic Harmonization

The 1996 and 2001 censuses report geographic identifiers at the level of the 1996 municipal district (MD), of which there are 353. The 2011 census reports geography at the 2011 municipality (MN) level, of which there are 234. We match 1996 MDs to 2011 MNs based on geographic overlap and assign each 1996 MD to the 2011 MN covering the largest share of its area.

Construction of Regression Sample

All regressions using intermarriage outcomes are estimated at the couple level. Because the censuses do not report age at marriage, we control for cohort effects using the spouses' current ages. We retain both husband's and wife's demographic characteristics (age, race, and mother tongue) in the dataset. Whenever a control variable must be defined at the couple level (e.g., when filtering on age or including age, race, or language controls), we use the husband's values by default. Results are robust to using the wife's characteristics instead. To focus on newly or recently formed couples and to avoid compositional biases from mortality or long-term stable marriages, the main analysis sample is restricted to couples where the husband is between 18 and 30 years old in a given census. Results are robust to alternative age cutoffs.

Descriptive Statistics

Table B.33 reports the prevalence of interracial and interethnic marriages by census year, among couples with husbands aged 18–30. Both forms of intermarriage were extremely rare in 1996, reflecting the legacy of apartheid-era restrictions that prohibited interracial marriage and indirectly constrained interethnic marriage through residential segregation into racially and ethnically homogeneous homelands and townships. The following fifteen years saw a steady increase in both interracial and, especially, interethnic unions.

Table B.33: Prevalence of Interracial and Interethnic Marriage by Census Year

	Interracial		Interethnic		
Census Year	Mean (%)	Std. Dev.	Mean (%)	Std. Dev.	N
1996	0.94	9.65	3.16	17.49	48,026
2001	1.54	12.32	6.60	24.83	48,513
2011	2.05	14.18	12.14	32.66	61,703

Notes: Sample restricted to opposite-sex couples where the husband is aged 18–30. Interethnic couples are defined only within racial groups; interracial and interethnic measures are orthogonal by construction.

B.5   TRC Data

B.5.1   Public Hearings

We collected the complete transcripts of all hearings from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission website and the South African Broadcasting Corporation Archives. These sources provide detailed information on the date, location, and content of each hearing.

To examine the extent to which hearings contained detailed and graphic information, we constructed a dictionary with two thematic categories: Violence and Reconciliation. The Violence category is intended to proxy the level of detail and truth revealed during the hearings, while the Reconciliation category aims to capture references to forgiveness by victims and repentance by perpetrators. The dictionaries are defined as follows:

Violence = ['abduct', 'assault', 'attack', 'arrest', 'arm', 'bomb', 'blood', 'bullet', 'burn', 'crime', 'crimin', 'dead', 'death', 'detain', 'detent', 'elimin', 'execut', 'fight', 'firearm', 'forc', 'gun', 'gunshot', 'harm', 'hurt', 'injur', 'interrog', 'kill', 'murder', 'shoot', 'suffer', 'terror', 'tortur', 'violenc', 'war']

Reconciliation = ['accord', 'agreement', 'admit', 'apolog', 'apologis', 'commit', 'truth', 'confess', 'cooper', 'justic', 'peac', 'reconcili', 'accept', 'excus', 'guilti']

We then measured the frequency of these terms as the number of occurrences per 1,000 words of transcript, allowing for comparisons across hearings of different lengths. Figure B.22 presents the distribution of these categories by hearing type over time. Interestingly, despite the different roles of victims and amnesty applicants, both types of hearings display relatively similar levels of emotional intensity and openness.

Figure B.22: Prevalence of Reconciliation and Violence Terms in TRC Hearings Over Time
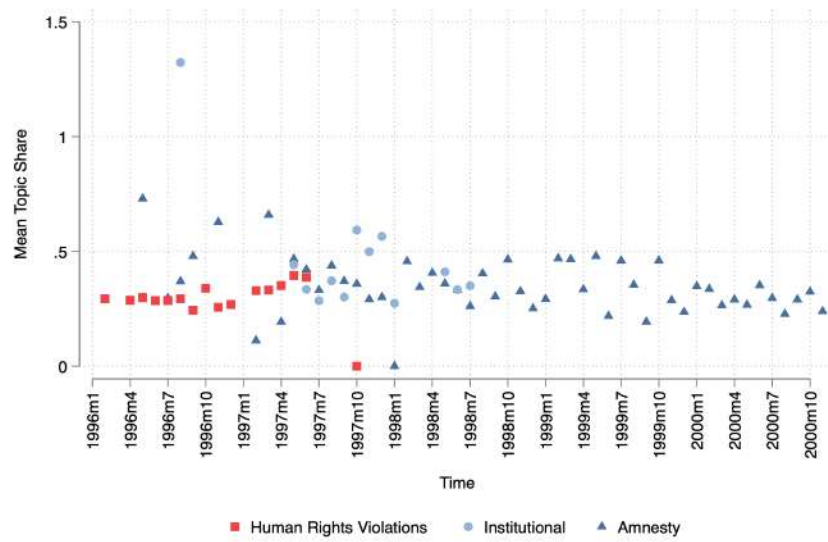
(a) Reconciliation
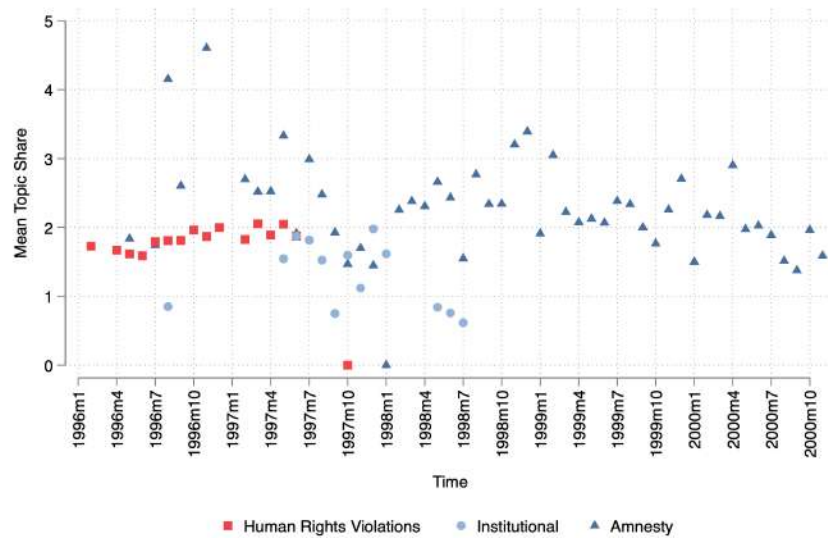
(b) Violence

Notes: The figure shows the frequency of terms related to reconciliation and violence in TRC hearings over time, expressed per 1,000 words of transcript.

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Applicant's Race and Ethnicity. We extracted the names of all amnesty applicants in order to infer their race and ethnicity. To construct this inference, we digitized a dictionary of South African names: *Jabulani* by Phumzile Simelane Kaumba, and complemented it with information from Behind the Name, a database that documents the etymology, origin, and history of first names for a wide range of countries. This process yielded approximately 12,622 unique names linked to race and ethnic categories.

For the sample of amnesty applicants, we manually coded race using applicants' first names, surnames, and, when necessary, the content of the hearings, resulting in classifications for 1,177 applicants. In addition, we implemented a dictionary-based fuzzy matching procedure using the Jaro-Winkler distance metric, which accounts for spelling variations and minor typographical inconsistencies when linking applicants' names to the reference dictionary. Manual validation of this approach indicates that the dictionary-based matches correctly identified race in approximately 70% of cases.[39] Most discrepancies arose in cases where a name was strongly associated with one racial group (e.g., a first name predominantly used among white South Africans) while the surname was associated with another group (e.g., a predominantly Black surname). Due to the lack of comprehensive surname dictionaries, we were unable to extend the dictionary-based match to surnames. For ethnicity, we rely exclusively on the dictionary-based matches. Given previous validation exercises, it is very likely that names are correctly classified. To the extent that measurement error exists, it is unlikely to be systematic.

Based on these classifications, we find that among applicants who proceeded to public hearings, approximately 67% were Black (Figure B.23, Panel A). However, when considering the number of hearings, White applicants accounted for 43% of them, suggesting that, on average, each White applicant participated in more hearings (Panel B). In terms of Black ethnicity, most applicants belong to the Zulu group (42%), followed by Tswana (22%), Xhosa (15%), Sotho (15%), and Ndebele (6%) (Panel C).
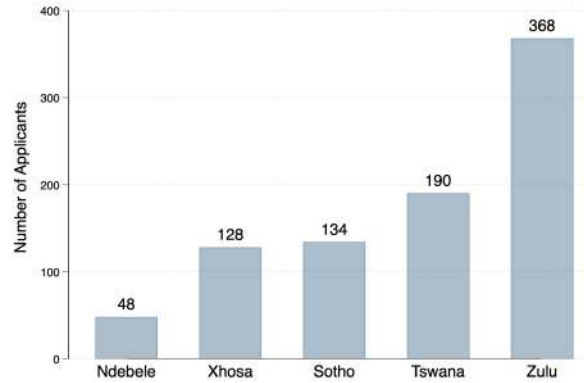
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[39]We validate this approach manually in the sample of amnesty hearings that we use in the main analysis.

Figure B.23: Distribution of Applicants and Hearings by Race
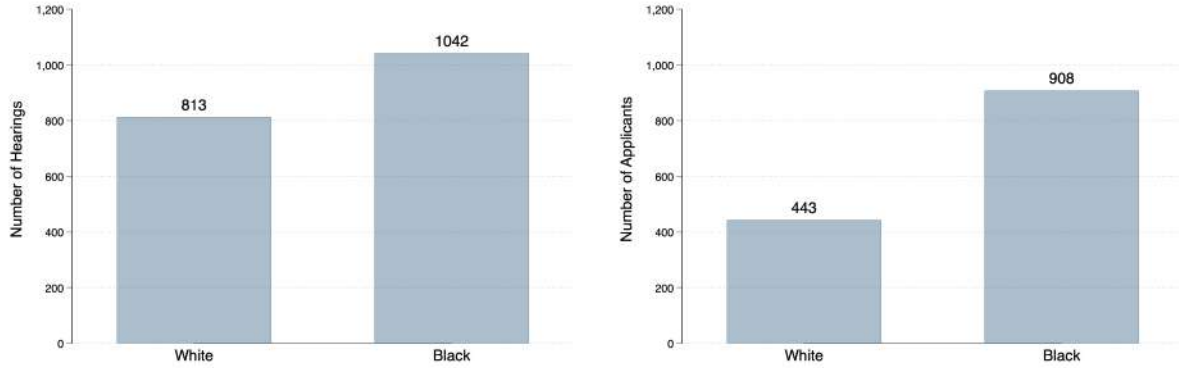
(a) Number of Hearings by Race of Applicant

(b) Number of Applicants by Race

(c) Number of Black Applicants by Ethnicity

Notes: Panel (a) shows the total number of amnesty applicants by race, while Panel (b) shows the total number of hearings associated with each race. The difference between the panels reflects the applicant may appear several hearings. Panel (c) shows the total number of black applicants by ethnicity. Source: own calculations based on TRC hearings transcripts.

Public Hearings Jun-Agust 2000. For our econometric analysis, we restrict the sample to amnesty hearings that overlapped with the first wave of Afrobarometer, as discussed in Section 6. This restriction yields 25 hearings and 61 applicants who provided statements before the Commission regarding their past wrongdoing. For this subsample, we manually extracted the race of each victim from the transcripts.

Figure B.24 shows that, among these hearings, approximately 40% involved Black applicants and 60% involved White applicants. In both groups, the majority of the violence described during the hearings was perpetrated against Black victims. Specifically, Black-on-Black violence was reported in 75% of hearings involving Black applicants, whereas White-on-Black violence occurred in 89% of hearings involving White applicants. These patterns highlight that, regardless of the applicant's race, the testimonies primarily document violence against Black victims, reflecting the broader historical context of apartheid-era abuses.

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Figure B.24: Applicants and Victims by Race
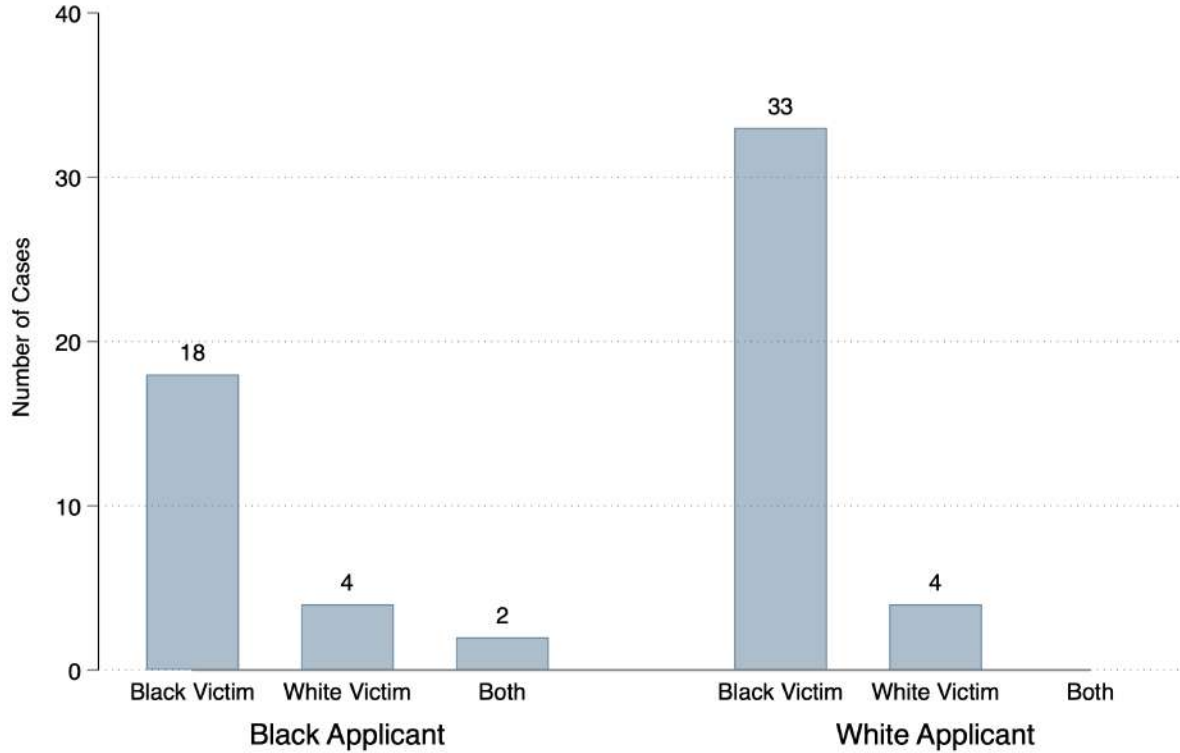
Notes: The figure shows the number of applicants in amnesty hearings overlapping with the first wave of Afrobarometer, broken down by the applicant's race and the race of the victims described.

In Table B.34, we provide a detailed summary of the perpetrators for the 25 hearings used in our empirical analysis. This includes the hearing ID, applicants' names, their race, and the race of their victims. Additionally, Table B.35 presents a summary of the main crimes and motives discussed during these hearings, offering an overview of the content and context of this sample.

Table B.34: Descriptive Statistics Amnesty Applicants Jun-August 2000

ID	Date	Applicant's Name	Applicant's Race	Victims' Race	URL
1	2000-07-06	Nicolaas Jacobus Janse Van Rensburg	white	black	Link
1	2000-07-06	Christiaan Siebert Rorich	white	black	Link
1	2000-07-06	Paul Jacobus Van Dyk	white	black	Link
1	2000-07-06	William Basil Hattingh	white	black	Link
1	2000-07-06	Wybrand Andreas Lodewickus Du Toit	white	black	Link
2	2000-07-07	Eugene Alexander De Kock	white	black	Link
2	2000-07-07	Isak Daniel Bosch	white	black	Link
4	2000-07-10	Johannes Albertus Steyn	white	black	Link
4	2000-07-10	Philip Rudolf Crause	white	black	Link

4	2000-07-10	Johannes Albertus Steyn	white	black	[Link](#)
4	2000-07-10	Wickus Johannes Loots	white	black	[Link](#)
4	2000-07-10	Rudi Crause	white	black	[Link](#)
4	2000-07-10	Christoffel Johannes Du Preez Smit	white	black	[Link](#)
4	2000-07-10	S H Schutte	white	black	[Link](#)
3	2000-07-10	Jerry Vusumsi Richardson	black	NA	[Link](#)
6	2000-07-11	Willem Frederick Schoon	white	black	[Link](#)
6	2000-07-11	Martin J Naude	white	black	[Link](#)
6	2000-07-11	Johannes Christoffel Meyer	white	black	[Link](#)
6	2000-07-11	J C Coetzee	white	black	[Link](#)
6	2000-07-11	Johan H Le Roux	white	black	[Link](#)
6	2000-07-11	Eugene Alexander De Kock	white	black	[Link](#)
6	2000-07-11	Wickus Johannes Loots	white	black	[Link](#)
5	2000-07-11	Jerry Vusumsi Richardson	black	black	[Link](#)
7	2000-07-12	Philip Rudolf Crause	white	black	[Link](#)
7	2000-07-12	Frik Crause	white	black	[Link](#)
7	2000-07-12	Johannes Albertus Steyn	white	black	[Link](#)
7	2000-07-12	Willem Helm Johannes Coetzee	white	black	[Link](#)
7	2000-07-12	Anton Pretorius	white	black	[Link](#)
7	2000-07-12	A M Heystek	white	black	[Link](#)
8	2000-07-12	Paul Jacobus Van Dyk	white	black	[Link](#)
8	2000-07-12	Cornelius Johannes Botha	white	black	[Link](#)
8	2000-07-12	Isak Daniel Bosch	white	black	[Link](#)
8	2000-07-12	Butana Almond Nofomela	black	black	[Link](#)
9	2000-07-13	Tshepo Stanley Buhali	black	black	[Link](#)
10	2000-07-13	Butana Almond Nofomela	black	black	[Link](#)
11	2000-07-17	Mzwandile L Ndaba	black	black	[Link](#)
11	2000-07-17	Charles M Dieta	white	black	[Link](#)
12	2000-07-18	Samuel Mandenkosi Mandlazi	black	black	[Link](#)
12	2000-07-18	Moruti Edmond Noosi	black	black	[Link](#)
14	2000-07-19	John Thabo Sphambo	black	black	[Link](#)
14	2000-07-19	Mathedi Samuel Mangena	black	black	[Link](#)
14	2000-07-19	Mzwandile A Damoyi	black	black	[Link](#)
13	2000-07-19	Simon Mogopo Radebe	black	black	[Link](#)
15	2000-07-23	Eugene Alexander De Kock	white	black	[Link](#)
16	2000-07-24	Phila Martin Dolo	black	white	[Link](#)
16	2000-07-24	Pitso George Makume	black	black	[Link](#)
18	2000-07-25	Thaledi Ephraim Mfalapitsa	black	black	[Link](#)
17	2000-07-25	Philip Nambo Masilo	black	white	[Link](#)
17	2000-07-25	Patrick Thapelo Maseko	black	black	[Link](#)
19	2000-07-26	Vontjie Mzimkhulu Moti	black	both	[Link](#)
20	2000-07-27	Vontjie Mzimkhulu Moti	black	both	[Link](#)
20	2000-07-27	George Nkosinati Thwala	black	black	[Link](#)
20	2000-07-27	Martin Mphatla Rampomane	black	black	[Link](#)
22	2000-07-31	Shaun Mark Callaghan	white	black	[Link](#)
21	2000-07-31	Sydney Patrick Kunene	black	black	[Link](#)
21	2000-07-31	Damien Michael De Lange	white	white	[Link](#)

21	2000-07-31	Ian Hugh Robertson	white	white	Link
21	2000-07-31	Susan Catherine De Lange	white	white	Link
21	2000-07-31	Johan Maboeti Shabangu	black	black	Link
23	2000-08-01	Ronald Kasrils	white	white	Link
24	2000-08-03	Motlane Atasius Mphoreng	black	white	Link
25	2000-08-04	Simon Kaka Ngubeni	black	white	Link

Table B.35: Summary Amnesty Hearings Jun-August 2000

ID	Date	Summary
1	2000-07-06	Crimes committed include unlawful shootings, torture, and mutilation of prisoners, justified by soldiers as following orders in a chaotic military base environment. Illegal transportation of potentially illicit materials was carried out without disclosure to the driver, implicating a cover-up. Unlawful delivery of firearms was done under orders, with the deliverer unaware of the contents. Acts of violence like pouring boiling water and cutting body parts occurred in an uncontrolled setting driven by cultural and ethnic factors. The shooting of injured individuals was rationalized as humanitarian or following orders not to take prisoners. The murder of severely wounded individuals was framed as a preemptive humanitarian act. Inaction during three murders was attributed to feeling powerless to intervene. Other segments discuss procedural matters without clear crimes or motives stated.
2	2000-07-07	The crimes committed involved a series of covert operations by a group led by Mr. de Kock, recruiting individuals with military backgrounds like Mr. Kentane for missions in neighboring states. These operations included planned assassinations and attacks on members of the ANC and PAC, aiming to neutralize them through recruitment or killing. The motives behind these actions were to subdue anti-apartheid movements and eliminate opposition. Crimes included the provision of illegal weapons, murders of ANC members, theft of vehicles, possession of firearms, and attacks on houses resulting in deaths. Motives ranged from financial gain to disrupting opposition activities. The crimes were part of a broader strategy to combat perceived enemies during a time of political conflict, with support from authorities to carry out covert missions.

ID	Date	Summary
4	2000-07-10	The crimes committed involved conspiracy, murder, and assassination allegations by Security Police and Special Forces in Botswana. Motives were rooted in apartheid-era operational objectives, with Security Police providing information for these operations. The crimes related to ANC and Umkhonto weSizwe activities, including armed actions and arms possession in 1985 and 1988, justified as part of the anti-apartheid struggle. Specific crimes included the conspiracy to eliminate ANC members, resulting in the targeted killing of individuals like Nkadimeng and Molefe. The Defence Force carried out murders and bombings, targeting perceived threats to South Africa's security. Collaboration between Police and Defence Force led to the planned killings, with Security Police providing intelligence for these actions. The crimes were justified within military operational strategies and the need to manage external threats to South Africa.
3	2000-07-10	The transcript lacks explicit details on the crimes committed by the accused or their motives. It mainly discusses procedural matters related to a hearing and logistical arrangements for transporting the individual. As a result, no specific information on the crimes or motives can be discerned from the document.
6	2000-07-11	The crimes committed include an unauthorized attack on a house in Botswana, targeting Nat Serache and his wife, resulting in potential injuries. The motives were rooted in addressing perceived threats related to anti-apartheid activities and involved the management and support of terrorist activities by a safehouse for MK members. The crimes also encompass conspiracy to commit murder, malicious damage to property, and defeating the ends of justice by not reporting incidents. The assaults on individuals and the failure of police officers to report crimes constitute further offenses. Motives for these crimes include addressing security concerns, eliminating perceived threats to national security, and seeking legal protection through amnesty applications. Delays in providing necessary documents for hearings were highlighted, impacting the fairness of proceedings due to inadequate preparation time.
5	2000-07-11	The text discusses crimes potentially committed by an individual referred to as Mr. Richardson, focusing on his mental fitness for legal proceedings. Mr. Richardson underwent a psychiatric assessment, possibly related to past political violence or violations. The crimes mentioned include murder, with implications of stress and anxiety affecting his mental state. The assessments aimed to determine his criminal responsibility and the impact of his mental state at the time of the alleged crime. The text also hints at a potential political motive behind the crimes, with references to Mr. Richardson's psychological state influencing his behavior. The segment does not explicitly detail the crimes committed but focuses on evaluating his mental health and intelligence for trial proceedings.

ID	Date	Summary
7	2000-07-12	The crimes committed involved a series of incidents related to political violence during the apartheid era in South Africa. Members of the African National Congress's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), were involved in planning and executing operations against perceived threats to their cause. These actions included the assassination attempt on a prominent ANC Commander, the use of explosives to target individuals, unauthorized surveillance, and the explosion of a vehicle at a hospital in Botswana resulting in casualties. Motives for these crimes were rooted in the political struggle against apartheid, with the perpetrators justifying their actions as necessary for national security and counter-insurgency efforts. The crimes included conspiracy to commit murder, damage to property, abduction, assault, and illegal detention, all within the context of a violent and volatile period in the region's history.
8	2000-07-12	The crimes committed in the testimonies include murder, conspiracy to commit murder, attempted murder, defeating the ends of justice, and perjury. The motives behind these crimes were instructions from a superior to eliminate individuals, along with a desire to protect a fellow officer. The crimes involved planned ambushes, shootings, and covert operations aimed at abducting and eliminating perceived threats. The context suggests a military or organizational framework where directives to kill were accepted as necessary actions to achieve political objectives. Justifications for the crimes were based on operational directives and a broader agenda of targeting specific individuals deemed as adversaries. The actions of the accused involved immediate lethal responses to perceived threats, attempts to conceal their actions, and deceptive communication within a structured group context.
9	2000-07-13	Multiple crimes were committed in Meadowlands in January 1988, including the bombing of municipal offices, ambushes on police vehicles, and armed attacks on law enforcement. Motivated by political resistance against eviction tactics and perceived intimidation by the police, individuals targeted police facilities to support the community and assert control over their area. Perpetrators armed with AK-47 rifles and pistols carried out planned attacks on police vehicles and stations, resulting in injuries to officers and informants. The crimes involved firing weapons at police vehicles with the intent to harm occupants, demonstrating premeditated aggression. Perpetrators aimed to show vulnerability of security forces and resist authorities, with some crimes involving unlawful possession of explosives and firearms. Testimonies revealed a lack of initial disclosure, later clarified due to misunderstanding of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's objectives.

ID	Date	Summary
10	2000-07-13	Multiple crimes were committed, including planned assassinations, unlawful shootings, and illegal transportation of individuals and weapons. The crimes were carried out by a group of individuals, possibly involving law enforcement or state agents, in a context of political or civil unrest. Motives for the crimes included eliminating threats or witnesses, self-defense claims, and armed resistance against oppressive regimes. The crimes involved shootings, possession of firearms, and mistreatment of detainees, with attempts to conceal actions and evade accountability. The individuals involved showed a lack of regard for the victims' well-being, focusing solely on carrying out the criminal acts. The context of the crimes suggests a coordinated effort among the perpetrators, with a clear intent to engage in violent activities for political or operational purposes.
11	2000-07-17	The testimonies detail various crimes committed, including assaults, unlawful arrests, physical assaults, detentions, torture, and coercive interrogation tactics. Motives for these crimes appear rooted in political agendas, such as protecting organizations from infiltration, countering threats, and extracting confessions. The context suggests a tumultuous period marked by political tensions, struggles against apartheid, and the need for control and secrecy within factions. The testimonies also mention administrative discrepancies regarding amnesty applications and confusion over procedural issues related to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Justifications for the crimes include the perceived necessity of certain measures, even if they deviated from official policies, with some actions being tacitly approved by higher-ranking individuals. The crimes were carried out by individuals within ANC structures, indicating a broader political context for the offenses.
12	2000-07-18	The accused, Mr. Mpungose, was wrongfully detained and subjected to interrogation due to suspicions of being a police informant against ANC members. The crimes committed against him include assault, coercion, physical violence, torture, and unlawful detention. Motives for these crimes were rooted in suspicions of betrayal and espionage, with perpetrators seeking control, security, and information. Mr. Mpungose faced physical abuse, coercion to admit false accusations, and mistreatment in various locations, including Chongele Farm and Angola. The context of political violence and power struggles, along with the fear for safety amid political turmoil, played a significant role in the crimes committed. The perpetrators aimed to intimidate, manipulate, and maintain dominance over Mr. Mpungose through violence and coercion.

ID	Date	Summary
14	2000-07-19	The crimes committed include mutiny, assault, theft, possession of prohibited items, wrongful imprisonment, and assault. The mutiny involved efforts to arrest mutineers during an emergency situation. Assaults were committed for discipline, personal grudges, and maintaining order during a crisis or war. Theft and possession of prohibited items were influenced by infiltrators exploiting vulnerable individuals for illicit gain. Wrongful imprisonment and death occurred due to political motives to protect the organization. Assaults were also politically motivated to maintain order within the organization and defend against opposition. The assaults and wrongful imprisonment were driven by the need to address unrest, complaints, and maintain discipline within the organization, with some incidents resulting in tragic outcomes like death and grievous bodily harm.
13	2000-07-19	The crimes committed in this case include abduction, potential extrajudicial killing, illegal possession of firearms, unlawful detainment, concealment of individuals in a safe-house, and potentially false imprisonment. These actions were carried out by members of the police force, including Mr. Radebe, in the context of state-sponsored violence during the apartheid era. Motives for these crimes were rooted in political repression, anti-insurgency efforts, and the perceived need to gather intelligence on organizations like the African National Congress (ANC) and Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). The crimes were justified as part of efforts to disrupt these organizations' operations and suppress political opponents, following orders from higher-ranking officials within the police force.
15	2000-07-23	The accused, implicated in training "askaris" during the apartheid era, committed crimes including murder, conspiracy to commit murder, illegal possession of firearms, and perjury. These actions were strategically aimed at countering ANC members and preserving state security. Specific incidents involved stabbing an activist in Swaziland, shooting an ANC member at a restaurant, and misleading the Harms Commission about cross-border attacks. Motives for these crimes were politically driven, with a focus on neutralizing perceived threats and obstructing justice to protect higher-ranking officials. The context suggests a broader conflict against the ANC, with the accused considering them as terrorists and aiming to prevent their infiltration into South Africa.

ID	Date	Summary
16	2000-07-24	The crimes committed by the accused individuals, including Phila Martin Dolo and APLA members, involved armed struggle against the apartheid government in South Africa. These actions targeted members of the South African Defence Force, police, and individuals associated with the regime. Specific crimes included an ambush in Eikenhof resulting in three deaths, an attack on a vehicle occupied by Settler School children and parents, and assaults on police officers at Diepkloof. Motives behind these crimes were rooted in opposition to the apartheid system, a desire for territorial expansion for liberation efforts, and a belief that apartheid supporters were criminals. The crimes were justified as part of a guerrilla warfare strategy to dismantle the oppressive regime and reclaim land for the African population. Confessions were allegedly extracted through torture, implicating wrongful convictions of ANC members. The actions were driven by a perceived need for self-determination, resistance against apartheid, and disillusionment with the ANC's suspension of armed activities.
18	2000-07-25	The crimes committed include murder, assassination, assault, torture, illegal transportation of weapons, and false arrests within the context of the African National Congress (ANC) during the anti-apartheid struggle. Motives for these actions were often tied to political affiliations and loyalty to the ANC, with individuals following orders from higher officials like Joe Modise and Keith Mokoape. Justifications for the crimes varied, from maintaining security within the organization to extracting information or addressing internal dissent. The crimes were carried out to support the ANC's fight against apartheid, involving military operations, reconnaissance, and efforts to maintain operational capability. The perpetrators often acted under the guise of security reasons or following orders from the ANC's command structure, demonstrating a complex interplay of loyalty, political motives, and control within the organization.
17	2000-07-25	Multiple crimes were committed by the accused, including murder, robbery, assault, and attempted burglary. The crimes were motivated by directives from leaders of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the African People's Liberation Army (APLA) to fund their organizations through criminal activities. The accused believed in the political ideologies of these groups, justifying their violent actions as part of the anti-apartheid struggle and a response to historical injustices. The crimes involved targeting white individuals, with specific instructions to kill, rob, or assault them. The accused followed orders from their leaders, such as Joshua Ghatle and Solomon Dlamini, to carry out these acts as tests of loyalty and commitment to the organizations. The motives behind the crimes were rooted in political beliefs, financial gain for the organizations, and a desire to challenge systemic oppression through violent means.

ID	Date	Summary
19	2000-07-26	The crimes committed by the accused individuals involved armed robbery, attempted theft, impersonation of Fidelity Guards employees, unlawful possession and use of vehicles and uniforms, and collaboration with criminal elements. Motives for these crimes included financial gain, recruitment efforts for APLA membership, and a perceived revolutionary struggle against economic injustices. The crimes were carried out with the intention of obtaining large sums of money, reclaiming stolen property, and seeking restitution for past wrongs related to land dispossession. The incidents also involved violent confrontations with law enforcement, resulting in casualties. The accused justified their actions as politically motivated responses to historical injustices and economic hardships faced by their community.
20	2000-07-27	The crimes committed by the accused involve multiple instances of car theft, armed robberies at various locations, and misappropriation of funds during a robbery at a bottle store. The accused rationalized the car thefts as "repossession" and claimed they were carried out under the direction of a figure associated with APLA. Motives for the crimes included political motivations, coercion by law enforcement, and adherence to directives from APLA and PAC. The accused denied personal gain from the thefts and robberies, stating they were part of group activities. The crimes were framed within a context of political conflict and organized crime, with the accused emphasizing their involvement in liberation movements and armed struggle against apartheid.
22	2000-07-31	The accused, seeking amnesty, committed various crimes including murder, attempted murder, assault, and grievous bodily harm at Katlehong Hospital and during military service in the South African Defence Force. Motives cited include inadequate training, political aspirations, and military objectives. Acts of violence like torture and murder were carried out in the context of interrogations to serve political parties' interests. In one instance, failing to transport a woman for cancer treatment resulted in her death, driven by a desire to maintain military secrecy. The murder and torture of SWAPO members were justified by military objectives and financial incentives. Actions were initially believed to protect South Africa but later revealed to align with supporting Angolan leader Savimbi's interests, causing disillusionment among conscripts.
21	2000-07-31	Multiple crimes were committed, including damage to property through arson attacks on a lounge, shopping complex, and a car. These acts were part of a military combat operation by an underground operative associated with the African National Congress (ANC), aimed at intimidating perceived collaborators or opponents in the context of the apartheid regime. Motives included instilling fear to discourage opposition to government actions, particularly targeting individuals involved in the electoral process. Perpetrators believed that intimidating political figures and disrupting local government structures would advance their anti-apartheid struggle. The crimes involved targeted violence, property damage, and intimidation tactics to dissuade electoral participation, with the ultimate goal of destabilizing the apartheid system. The escalation of violence led to fatal consequences, including looting and a shooting incident resulting in deaths.

ID	Date	Summary
23	2000-08-01	The crimes committed by a unit of Umkhonto weSizwe included explosions at a communications tower and a military bus, targeting personnel and institutions associated with the apartheid regime. These actions were politically motivated, part of the liberation struggle against apartheid, and aimed at weakening the oppressive system. The perpetrators, acting under command, believed collateral damage was necessary to achieve their goals. The crimes involved bombings by the Brooderstroom Cell, targeting members of the South African Defence Force, Police, or Security Services. The motive was to eliminate enemy personnel to hasten the end of apartheid, with efforts made to minimize civilian harm. The use of explosive devices in attacks aimed at specific entities while avoiding civilian casualties was justified as necessary in the struggle against apartheid.
24	2000-08-03	Multiple crimes were committed, including the murder of a security guard in Orlando East in 1986. The motive behind these acts was politically driven, with the accused being part of organizations fighting against the apartheid regime. The crimes involved illegal acquisition of weapons, planned assassinations, armed attacks on security guards, and armed confrontations with the intent to disarm guards. The attackers believed in using violence to achieve liberation and targeted private sector companies supporting the government. The crimes were part of a broader political strategy, with specific roles assigned by commanders. Justifications included self-defense, undermining government support, and following orders to disarm guards. The attackers sought amnesty, citing political motives and the need for legal forgiveness for their actions.
25	2000-08-04	The accused, referred to as Mr. Ngubeni, committed a series of crimes including murder, attempted murder, attempted escape, possession of a hand grenade, torture, wrongful imprisonment, and planned killings. These actions were allegedly carried out in the context of defending the community during a turbulent period and resisting alleged torture and coercion by law enforcement. The crimes were politically motivated, with Mr. Ngubeni claiming to be targeted by a group known as the Third Force and facing state-sanctioned harassment. The involvement of criminal elements within law enforcement and the prison system was also highlighted, indicating exploitation of the political landscape for personal or institutional gain. The accused justified his actions as self-defense and resistance against political repression, aiming to maintain control over political activists and combat violence from opposing groups.

B.5.2 Violence under apartheid

We obtained data from the South African Broadcasting Corporation Archives, which contain the TRC's register of victims of politically motivated crimes. This register compiles statements collected nationwide, in which victims or their families provided detailed accounts of killings, assaults, and other forms of politically motivated violence through written or oral submissions to regional TRC offices. Victims could submit statements in any of South Africa's official languages, making the process widely accessible. The TRC actively publicized the opportunity to come forward, but lo-

gistical challenges—including reaching remote rural areas and overcoming mistrust of authorities—
likely limited participation. Despite these barriers, over 21,000 statements were collected, covering
roughly 28,750 individual victims. Later, the Human Rights Violations Committee invited roughly
10% of registered victims to testify in public hearings (TRC Final Report 1998a, Vol. 1, Ch. 6).

From this registry, we are able to obtain the location of each incident (city or province, depending on transcript detail) and the date, which may be precise to the day or only the year, depending on the available records.

B.6 Data from SARS

The panel includes firms from 2008 to 2018, constructed from two types of forms submitted by firms: corporate income tax declarations (CIT) and personal income tax forms submitted on behalf of employees. We extract firms' revenue from the CIT, and infer their location from the IRP5 forms. Importantly, firms are not required to directly report their location. However, employees must indicate their firm's postal code on their tax declaration (IRP5). We assign a firm's location based on the postal code associated with the largest total wage expenditure, according to the IRP5 forms, in the most recent year the firm appears in the panel.

In addition to revenue and location, we observe the number of employees, the proportion of female employees, the average wage, and the firm's industry code. Table A.31 presents descriptive statistics for our firm-level sample, which includes 704,000 firms. The average firm has an annual revenue of 41,000 Rands and employs just under 50 people. The largest industry by firm count is finance and business (23%), followed by manufacturing (13%) and retail/motor trade (11%). Firms in the lowest quartile of TRC exposure residual tend to be smaller than those in the highest quartile, employing around 20% fewer workers and generating 33% less revenue.

C   Alternative Mechanisms

The main text argues that exposure to TRC broadcasts fostered intra-Black cohesion by generating reconciliation, an emotionally mediated process through which individuals revised their attitudes toward out-group members within the broader Black community, developed a sense of shared injustice, and reoriented their identification toward the nation. In this appendix, we examine a series of alternative mechanisms that do not rely on reconciliation and therefore provide conceptually distinct pathways to increased national identity. For each, we assess whether quasi-exogenous variation in TRC media exposure is associated with corresponding changes in attitudes measured in the Afrobarometer surveys.

These alternative mechanisms share a common feature: they would operate through shifts in the perceived legitimacy of different institutions, leaders, or civic values, rather than through the interpersonal and intergroup processes that characterize reconciliation in our framework. We show below that the data do not support any of these channels.

C.1   Data and Coding of Variables

- Contact Traditional Leaders, from waves 2, 3, 4 and 6: 'During the past year, how often have you contacted any of the following persons for help to solve a problem or to give them your views? Traditional ruler/traditional leader.' (1 = contacted at least once; 0 = never).

- Corruption among Traditional Leaders, from wave 6: 'How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? Traditional leaders.' (1 = "most of them" or "all of them"; 0 = "none" or "some of them"; "don't know" and refusals coded as 0).

- Trust Police, from waves 1 to 6: 'How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? The police.' (1 = "somewhat" or "a lot" / "a lot" or "a very great deal"; 0 = "just a little", "not at all", or other responses).

- Trust Courts, from waves 1 to 6: 'How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? The courts of law.' (1 = "somewhat" or "a lot" / "a lot" or "a very great deal"; 0 = "just a little", "not at all", or other responses).

- Trust Ruling Party, from waves 2 to 6: 'How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? The ruling party.' (1 = "somewhat" or "a lot"; 0 = "just a little", "not at all", or other responses).

- Democracy is Best, from waves 1 to 6: 'Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion? (1) Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government; (2) In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable; (3) For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have.' (1 = respondent chooses "Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government"; 0 = any other option or "don't know").

- Respect Free Speech, from waves 3 and 4: 'Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement A or Statement B. Statement A: The government should be able to ban any organization that goes against its policies. / The government should be able to limit people's right to say what they think. Statement B: People should be able to say what they think about politics, and organize peacefully, without interference from the government.' (1 = respondent sides with Statement B (free speech); 0 = sides with Statement A or neither).

C.2 Results

Traditional elites. One potential explanation is that TRC exposure weakened the authority of traditional leaders. If Black South Africans had shifted political allegiance away from traditional authorities and toward national institutions, rising national identification could reflect a reconfiguration of leadership preferences rather than reconciliation. This mechanism is conceptually distinct from reconciliation: it would operate through reassessing the credibility of institutional actors, not through improving attitudes toward members of another ethnic group.

The evidence does not support this view. TRC exposure has no measurable effect on the likelihood of contacting them, or perceptions of corruption within traditional authority structures (Table C.36, columns 1-2). These null results make it unlikely that changes in national identity were driven by shifts in the legitimacy of traditional elites.

Liberal values. A second possibility is that TRC broadcasts promoted liberal civic values–such as support for individual rights, the rule of law, or freedom of expression–that might lead individuals to adopt more inclusive national identities. Contrary to a reconciliation-based mechanism, it would imply a shift in broad normative commitments rather than in attitudes toward specific ethnic or racial groups. Here again, we find no evidence of such an effect. TRC exposure does not change attitudes toward democracy or support for free speech (Table C.36, columns 3-4). The absence of shifts in liberal civic values suggests that value transmission is not driving the patterns we observe.

Institutional trust. A third alternative concerns trust in state institutions. TRC exposure might have increased trust in the post-apartheid government among Blacks while decreasing it among Whites who viewed the TRC as biased. This channel is again distinct from reconciliation as it would reflect updated beliefs about institutional fairness or performance, rather than improved intergroup attitudes. We find no effect of TRC exposure on trust toward the ruling party or beliefs about equality before the law (columns 5-6). The absence of systematic changes in institutional trust rules out this explanation.

Rule of law. Finally, TRC exposure could have influenced perceptions of the judicial system. If individuals viewed courts or police more favorably or unfavorably following the hearings, changes in national identity might reflect evolving views of legal institutions rather than reconciliation.

The results do not align with this channel. We do not observe any significant declines in trust toward courts or the police (columns 7-8). Moreover, as already seen, perceptions of judicial fairness remains unchanged (columns 6). These patterns offer little support for a rule-of-law mechanism.

C.3 Summary

Across all four mechanisms (traditional elites, liberal values, institutional trust, and perceptions of the rule of law), we find no evidence consistent with the notion that TRC exposure shifted attitudes toward institutions, leaders, or civic norms in ways that could account for the rise in nation-building among Black South Africans. These channels are conceptually distinct from reconciliation, and the absence of corresponding empirical responses further strengthens the interpretation advanced in the main text: the TRC fostered intra-Black cohesion primarily through emotionally mediated reconciliation processes, rather than through changes in institutional legitimacy or civic values.

Table C.36: Alternative Mechanisms

Dependent Variable:	Traditional Leader		Liberal Democracy		Legitimacy		Trust Judiciary	
	Contact	Corrupt	Best	Free Speech	Trust Party	Unequal	Courts	Police
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
TRC Media × Black	−0.058	−0.023	−0.015	−0.007	0.020	−0.017	−0.001	0.010
	(0.049)	(0.053)	(0.030)	(0.048)	(0.025)	(0.033)	(0.034)	(0.032)
TRC Media × White	−0.057	−0.029	−0.024	−0.085	0.018	−0.070	−0.091	0.010
	(0.098)	(0.261)	(0.112)	(0.319)	(0.086)	(0.102)	(0.061)	(0.058)
Geographic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethnic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Socio-Econ	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ind Demo	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ind Ethnic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Race × Wave FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Race × Muni FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Muni × Wave FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of Dep. Var.	0.13	0.21	0.64	0.75	0.48	0.49	0.56	0.43
Adj R^2	0.09	-0.06	0.07	0.00	0.15	0.08	0.09	0.07
Observations	8738	2151	12975	4333	10907	10907	12975	12975

Note: This table presents results on additional outcomes from Afrobarometer for the long-run analysis. The dependent variables are: whether the respondent has contacted a traditional leader in the past 12 months (column 1), thinks traditional leaders are corrupt (column 2), whether democracy is the best political system (column 3), whether freedom of expression is more important than government being allowed to suppress expression (column 4), trust toward the ruling party (column 5), whether people are often treated unequally by the law (column 6), whether the respondent trusts the courts (column 7), and whether the respondent trusts the police (column 8). The unit of observation is the individual. TRC media exposure is standardized to have mean zero and standard deviation one. Race-specific effects are based on interactions between race indicators and TRC media exposure and are reported as marginal effects from fully interacted models. All specifications include the same set of controls: baseline suburb-level characteristics measured in 1996 (free-space signal strength for each media outlet, the inverse hyperbolic sine of population, population shares by race and employment status, area, altitude, ruggedness, and their squared terms); geographic characteristics (temperature, rainfall, agricultural suitability, distance to the coast and inland water, and squared terms); ethnic composition (shares of English, Afrikaans, and Zulu speakers and the Black population share); socioeconomic characteristics (income score, urbanization, marital status, religious affiliation, and age composition); and individual-level controls (gender, race, age, age squared, rural residency, and educational attainment). All regressions include municipality-by-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level and reported in parentheses. Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

D The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment

In this section, we provide a more comprehensive picture of the history and legislation of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment.

The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) policy, introduced initially as Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) in 1993, was implemented to promote the economic participation of historically disadvantaged groups in South Africa. This policy was designed to address deep-seated racial inequalities by fostering Black ownership, management, and employment in the South African economy. One of its key components is a rating system that evaluates firms based on their performance across various dimensions of empowerment. The resulting B-BBEE scores directly affect a company's ability to engage in public sector procurement, incentivizing them to actively work towards reducing racial disparities within their operations.

Under B-BBEE, firms are evaluated according to a scorecard that includes criteria such as Black ownership, employment equity, skills development, enterprise and supplier development, and socioeconomic development. Points are awarded based on how well a firm meets these criteria, with the cumulative score determining its overall B-BBEE status. This status is crucial in the public procurement process: firms with higher B-BBEE ratings are afforded preferential treatment, increasing their chances of securing contracts. Moreover, firms with strong B-BBEE scores are also more attractive business partners for other companies seeking to improve their procurement recognition levels. The policy, thus, is supposed to create chain effects, encouraging widespread compliance with B-BBEE principles across industries.

The impact of B-BBEE compliance varies significantly based on a firm's size, with the policy categorizing businesses into three distinct groups. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), defined as those with an annual revenue below 10 million ZAR, are automatically granted the highest B-BBEE status, exempting them from the stringent requirements placed on larger businesses. Qualifying Medium Enterprises (QMEs) with revenues between 10 and 50 million ZAR are awarded a medium B-BBEE status by default. However, they have the opportunity to improve their status if they reach a B-BBEE score higher than the one assigned by default. For large enterprises with revenues exceeding 50 million ZAR, their B-BBEE status is determined entirely by their score on the B-BBEE scorecard. This tiered approach creates notable thresholds at the 10 and 50 million ZAR revenue mark, beyond which firms face stricter obligations and more pressure to improve their B-BBEE compliance. Consequently, this policy introduces significant discontinuities in compliance incentives as firms grow in size.

We focus on the 10 million ZAR threshold for two main reasons. First, this threshold is relevant to a much higher share of firms than the 50 million ZAR threshold. Second, management decisions in larger firms with multiple plants are less likely to be influenced by local conditions such as exposure to the TRC.