

Welcome

*to a place where majestic mountains¹
meet wild, open seas. A place of rolling green
valleys and vast, untouched plains. A place
where you can find yourself again. Whatever
you are a looking for, you will find it here.*

*You wear white socks
and you like to be neat.*

*You have to have your hair
tied up. No make-up,
no jewelry.*

*A teacher once
commented on the fact
that you wear necklaces to
school every day, but she
actually said: 'I like that
necklace!' Because you're
generally seen as a good
student you can get away
with more.*

*Your skirts have to be
a certain length and*

DRESSCODE UNIFORM

*a lot of people will roll them up.
You are allowed two piercings
in each ear and that's it.*

SHE APPEARS TO BE A POP STAR²

You dyed your hair pink once

**Schools have certain policies
get the fuck over it oh my
head!**

*You dyed your hair pink once
and got in trouble.*

*The schools always talk about their 'brand,' which you don't think is
very nice. Especially 'cause it's a government school, but anyway!
Unfortunately a lot of schools are looked at as businesses and are run
like businesses instead of like homes or educational environments. (...)
A lot of parents have this thing, where they would prefer to send their
children to a school which has a neat uniform³ (...)
So it does represent the school's brand as a whole. It's good advertising
for a school. (...) Sometimes you don't want to represent your school and
then when you leave and go home and you're wearing this uniform, you
feel like: Oh, I don't want to do anything especially amazing in it because
I don't want to give them a good name.*

**SHOW ME
HOW YOU
WANT IT
TO BE!**

MARLENE DENNINGMANN

Welcome

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meet wild, open seas. A place of rolling green
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**SHOW
ME
HOW**



**YOU
WANT IT
TO BE!**

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**SHE APPEARS
TO BE A POP STAR**

**SHE APPEARS
TO BE AN ACTIVIST⁸**

**YOU MUST CONFESS:
YOU STILL BELIEVE,
STILL BELIEVE!**



Glossar:

1. **Mountain View** is available to international tourists visiting Cape Town from all over the world in luxury apartments, hotel rooms or Airbnb rentals. It is available to locals living in > **Camps Bay** and it is available to locals living in > **Khayelitsha**.

> **Camps Bay's** key results for the last census shows that the population is predominantly white (80%). 88% of those aged 20 years and older have completed Grade 12 or higher (Census 2011).

> **Khayelitsha's** most recent census shows that the population is predominantly Black African 99%. 36% of those aged 20 years and older have completed Grade 12 or higher (Census 2011).



Britney Spears is a white, blonde **pop star** who became famous in a school uniform. Her breakthrough song ... *Baby One More Time* came with a music video showing the 17-year-old in a version of a school uniform that has been redesigned and freed from any dress code limitations by the singer and thus re-appropriated as a rebellious look. She was quoted in *People Magazine* as saying: "The outfits looked kind of dorky, so I was like, "Let's tie up our shirts and be cute."

3. "I heard very good things about your school from a fellow filmmaker, who grew up in Cape Town and now lives in Berlin. He mentioned that you even have a drama department, and I would be so excited to talk about the possibility of collaborating.

I am a filmmaker and video artist based in Berlin, Germany, and I am planning to work on a project in Cape Town. It is inspired by the motif of school **uniforms**, which we do not have in Germany.

School uniforms have an interesting cultural history: spread throughout the world under British colonial rule, they have now become the signature outfit of rebelling teenagers in pop culture. Together with students I would like to analyze, de- and reconstruct these images, eventually resulting in a short film. I chose Cape Town because of its recent political history, it's multicultural population, and popularity among immigrants. It seems a great place to talk about finding an identity as a teenager under the influence of different cultural backgrounds in times of globalization.'

– 'Dear Marlene
What would you need from the school to action your project?
Regards'

4. A **code of conduct** allows a school to define a set of rules that are considered proper practice for their students. Actions that are not in accordance with the violations can be sanctioned. The code of conduct in South African schools often defines a strict dress code around their school uniform.

5. The most common language spoken as a first language by South Africans is isiZulu (23%), followed by **isiXhosa** (16%), Afrikaans (14%), and English (9.6%). isiXhosa and isiZulu are one of eight languages from the Bantu family spoken in South Africa. While isiZulu is most common in Johannesburg and the KwaZulu Natal Province, isiXhosa is widespread in the Eastern Cape Province and Cape Town. 98% of inhabitants of Cape Town's township Khayelitsha speak isiXhosa. The language has been internationally known for its 'click sounds,' after the traditional Xhosa song *Qongqothwane* was made famous by the South African singer Miriam Makeba.

6. **Struggle Songs** (also Freedom or Liberation Songs) accompanied the resistance against apartheid, which eventually ended with the first democratic elections in 1994. The a capella songs mostly sung in isiXhosa and isiZulu were part of the South African freedom movement from as early as 1912, when the ANC (African National

Congress) opened and closed meetings with *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika* (God Bless Africa).

7. **Fees Must Fall** or #feesmustfall is a movement that emerged from student protests starting in 2015 on the campus of the University Of Cape Town (UCT): #rhodesmustfall attacked a monument of Cecil Rhodes, a South African politician active in the 19th century, placed prominently in front of the UCT Campus. Rhodes played an important role in the advancement of the South African university system, but also held deeply racist views and is considered one of the so-called 'architects of apartheid.' The statue was finally deinstalled in front of a cheering crowd. Protests occurred again when a raise of tuition fees was announced. The debate around the decolonization of universities continued with the demand of free education for all and an end of the structural injustice of the South African education system. Classes and campus life around the country were repeatedly disrupted by protests between 2015 and 2017, at times leading to violent clashes with security staff and police. While some universities announced their solidarity with the movement's cause and called for participation in peaceful marches, the movement received a lot of public backlash. The media focus on radical parts of the movement as well as the idea of the 'born free' youth – a generation seen as liberated from apartheid – sparked controversy among older generations who had experienced systematic oppression. Increasingly turning into a black empowerment movement, the most hostile responses to Fees Must Fall also exposed a still existent, blatant racism in parts of the population.



At the age of thirteen, **Zulaikha Patel** became internationally known and praised as a civil rights activist when she participated in a protest against her school's policy against natural hairstyles of African origin. A video of her calmly resisting the school's security staff went viral under the hashtag #StopRacismAtPretoriaHigh in 2016. The attention of the public as well as local and international press made Patel the face of an upcoming generation of black South Africans still fighting for equality fifteen years past the official end of apartheid. Similar protests at former > **Model C** schools emerged across the country and resulted in a change of many a school's > **codes of conducts**. The iconic images of Patel have been circulating on social media platforms ever since.

> **Model C** refers to South African government schools that were once reserved for white students only and during the end of the apartheid era were converted to semi-private schools, who would then often change their admission policies to accept students of all races. Model C is not a legal form today. Former Model C schools are to this day among the best performing public schools and tend to charge higher fees – a practice that in South Africa is not reserved for private schools. The socio-economic background of learners is thus mixed, but tends to be middle and upper class. 88% of learners are white.

Images:

(Image 1): Camps Bay Beach, Cape Town (SA), documentary film still, 2017

(Image 2): Camps Bay, Cape Town (SA), documentary film still, 2017

(Image 3): Langa, Cape Town (SA), documentary film still, 2017

(Image 4): Cape Town (SA), workshop film still, 2016

(Image 5): Khayelitsha, Cape Town (SA), documentary film still, 2017

(Image 6): Observatory, Cape Town (SA), documentary film still, 2017

(Image 7): ... Baby One More Time, music video film still, 1998. Director: Nigel Dick

(Image 8): Zulaikha Patel, viral image via Instagram

Project credits:

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You allege that the school's code of conduct⁴ is discriminatory. You are reportedly unhappy about the dress code

Schools have certain policies get the fuck over it oh my head!
This hairstyle is not pretty; it's just a statement!

You are reportedly unhappy about the dress code that bars 'exotic hairstyles,' among other issues. You are penalized for speaking in your mother tongue. You once spoke isiXhosa⁵ at school and got in trouble.

**YOU MUST CONFESS:
YOU STILL BELIEVE,
STILL BELIEVE!**

Your protest is peaceful.

Just looking for an excuse to ditch school.

Your protest is peaceful, you are singing struggle songs⁶ and raising placards high in the air. Police vehicles are dispatched to the school. You are joined by university students from the Fees Must Fall⁷ movement.

**YOU
WANT IT
TO BE!**

**SHOW
ME
HOW**

You are permitted to speak (...). Your hair (...) is permitted (...). This code of conduct has been redrafted. We like your necklace. You are a pop star. Whatever you are

**SHE APPEARS
TO BE AN ACTIVIST⁸**

Whatever you are looking for you will find it here. You will find yourself making every excuse possible not to miss the sunset reflecting off the mountain.