In his 1930 book, *The Bantu Are Coming*, American Board missionary Ray Phillips highlighted the contradictory ideas about African women prevalent in the white community. Discussing "The Social Gospel and Woman," he reconstructed a "typical rural scene": an African woman and man walking down the road, the woman burdened with a baby on her back and bundles in her arms and on her head, and the man marching jauntily ahead of her carrying a light walking stick. When a newly arrived missionary reprimanded the man for having his wife bear such a heavy load, the astonished man replied, "...if my wife doesn't carry it, whose wife is going to do it?" From this representation of "traditional" rural women as overburdened victims, Phillips then moved to express his alarm at uncontrolled women who moved to the towns, becoming a "perplexing problem" for missionaries and social workers.

* My thanks to the journal's anonymous reader for extremely insightful comments on an earlier draft of this article.

One of a small group of Americans who arrived in Johannesburg in the turbulent years after World War I, Phillips sought to devise a "Social Gospel" that would confront the era's crime-ridden slums, political turbulence, strikes and racial tension by awakening white South Africans to the country's social problems and providing Africans with alternatives to the radical messages of "communist" political activists. Working with other white liberals, these urban missionaries launched projects to foster communication between whites and Africans (most notably the Joint Councils for Africans and Europeans) and to "moralize" the leisure time of African city dwellers. The Bantu Men's Social Centre, the main product of this initiative founded in 1924, sponsored concerts, free films (carefully censored), a debating and literary society, church services, sporting activities and a library. Phillips took particular pride in having pacified the "animal energies" of African mine workers during the 1922 white mine workers strike by showing a Charlie Chaplin movie.2

Although these activities reflected a primary interest in influencing African men, Phillips's negative images of African women as either victims or "demoralized" troublemakers reflected widespread attitudes that influenced South African political life for many years. After the new apartheid government assumed power in 1948, legislators imbued with these ideas targeted urban women with particular vehemence. Labeling them and their children "superfluous appendages" of male workers who had a right to live in the towns, the state began regulating women in new ways. On the basis of laws passed in 1952, for the first time in the country's history all women were forced to carry the hated passes that subjected them to police searches and to the constant threat of deportation to impoverished rural areas.3 These measures drew on the longstanding association of African women and children with immorality, crime and unregulated sexuality expressed strongly in Phillips's early writings. Yet Phillips also reflected, and

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3 Although some local governments began implementing new controls in the wake of this legislation, the central government only began issuing reference books to women in 1956. See Cherryl Walker, Women and Resistance in South Africa, London: Onyx Press, 1982, p.130 for more detail on these laws and their implementation.